

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION



The National Federation of the Blind is not an organization
speaking for the blind--it is the blind speaking for themselves

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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CONVENTION IN SESSION.

Seated alphabetically by states, delegates to the 25th anniversary convention pack the grand ballroom of Washington's Mayflower Hotel to hear an address by Speaker of the House of Representatives John W. McCormack. (Picture at left.)


"MISTER CHAIRMAN!"

A typical scene during business sessions: a cluster of convention delegates in competition for one of the many floor microphones distributed throughout the auditorium. The gentleman with his hand on the mike claims first priority. (Picture at right.)



WAITING FOR HUMPHREY.

Members of the NFB's National Executive Committee, seated at right, await the appearance of Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey. Standing at left, with back to camera, is Federation President Russell Kletzing. (Picture at left.)



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EDITOR'S PREFACE
by Dr. Jacobus tenBroek

This is a special issue of THE BRAILLE MONITOR -- commemorating a special event in the history of the journal and of the organized blind movement. The issue consists of a report-in-depth of the 1965 Silver Anniversary Convention of the National Federation of the Blind, held in Washington, D. C., July 6 through July 9.

The Federation's annual convention is, of course, always an important event. But the Washington convention just past -- as all who were there can testify -- was an occasion of unusual excitement and significance. The record of that memorable week deserves to be reported and preserved in all its fullness and variety, for its own sake but also as a stage in the Federation's history and in the context of program and legislative developments. As a report in depth, it covers more than the usual ground. The report includes several documents of permanent importance, which many Federationists will wish to retain for future reference.

The present issue is special in another way. In preparation it has been a collaborative undertaking. In composition, however, the convention stories are the work of THE BRAILLE MONITOR'S Assistant Editor, Dr. Floyd W. Matson. This represents a departure from the regular and customary procedures of close collaboration between its two editors by which the magazine is produced each month. That collaboration will be fully resumed next month -- although, it should be noted, under somewhat altered circumstances. Dr. Matson will be leaving Berkeley in September for a year as a visiting professor at the University of Hawaii. During that time he will continue to take an active part in the writing and editing of the MONITOR. Correspondence and written contributions should be addressed as always to: THE BRAILLE MONITOR, 2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley, California 94708.

I should like to take advantage of this editorial opportunity to add a footnote to the preceding paragraph. The collaborative relationship between Floyd and myself is one both of long standing and of multiple dimensions. It began more than 15 years ago, when he was the student and I was the professor. Among its early fruits was PREJUDICE, WAR, AND THE CONSTITUTION, of which we were co-authors. Another was HOPE DEFERRED. That collaboration has sometimes been carried on over great distances -- more than once across the entire Pacific. I am happy to say that it has survived the rigors of time, distance, and occasional

storms at sea without weakening.

On another front, Floyd's participation has long been known to those who have seen him in action at national conventions -- dating back to 1953 -- where he has regularly been in charge of our publicity and public relations, as he was again this year at Washington. It is the mutual hope and expectation of the editors that their collaboration will continue on many fronts until, say, the Golden Anniversary of the National Federation.

"THE WEEK THAT WAS"

For nearly one thousand blind Americans and their families, the week of July 4, 1965, will long be a time to remember -- with pleasure, with purpose, and with pride.

For "that was the week that was": the week of the Washington convention, magnificently commemorating the Silver Anniversary of the National Federation of the Blind

The week of Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, announcing to delegates in ringing tones that "The proof of your achievement is that what once had been private goals -- your goals -- have now become public official goals, our goals as a nation"

The week of Senator Robert F. Kennedy, the Federation's gift volume in his hands, pledging to carry on the profound commitment of his brother John F. Kennedy to the rights of the blind to speak for themselves and to be heard

The week of Speaker of the House John W. McCormack, delivering the convention's keynote address, commending Federationists for their spirit of independence, their implementation of the constitutional right to organize, and the effectiveness of their advice to Congress on legislation affecting the blind

The week of our own president Russell Kletzing, presiding over historic events and helping to make them so by his own performance and speeches

The week of Senator Vance Hartke, Senator Frank Moss, Congressman Walter S. Baring and Congressman Phillip Burton, one

by one narrating their personal hopes and collective efforts to raise the standards of aid and opportunity for the nation's blind.

That was the week that was: the week of television cameras pointed like howitzers at the speaker's stand from both sides of the packed auditorium... of news reporters and photographers circling about the platform, scribbling notes and popping flashbulbs . . . of microphones clustered like a metal bouquet on the rostrum . . . of radio interviews and TV broadcasts beamed to all parts of the country.

That was the week that was: the week of the "Hartke demonstration," a spontaneous migration of hundreds of federationists to the Capitol in order to lend graphic support to the fight for the Hartke bill then in contest on the Senate floor . . . a fight which was rewarded with overwhelming Senate passage of the historic measure on July 9.

That was the week that was: the week of the "banquet of banquets" -- the monumental convention dinner which brought together 600 federationists and 103 members of Congress in a single room for a single purpose . . . with Representatives and Senators rising in turn for an impromptu 30-second speech . . . each one commanded, clocked and congratulated by a masterly if unceremonious Master of Ceremonies, First Vice President Kenneth Jernigan . . . a stirring occasion made still more memorable by the address of President Emeritus Jacobus tenBroek, which was hailed by one Congressman present as "the best speech I have ever heard bar none."

That was the week of social commingling and reunion: of community sings around the piano in the vast Hospitality Room . . . of busloads of conventioners complete with children, dogs, and television cameramen touring the Washington and Lincoln monuments, the Jefferson Memorial, and the Kennedy grave at Arlington . . . a week of gatherings by the fountain in the Mayflower Hotel lobby, of convivial tables in the Presidential Room and smaller groups consorting in the Rib Room, and of expeditions to Scholl's Colonial Cafeteria. . . of exhibits in the Cabinet Room, open house in the national convention suite, and private parties everywhere . . . a week of festivity, fellowship, and federationism.

That was the week of international federation: of speeches and panel discussions featuring overseas leaders of the worldwide blind movement -- from Germany, Equador, Saudi Arabia, England, and Korea -- along with our own famed internationalists, Dr. tenBroek and Dr. Isabelle Grant.

That was the week of the Leadership Seminar: a two-day conclave following the convention of some 60 stalwart federationists from numerous states, living and studying together at the University of Maryland's Center for Adult Education -- reviewing, debating and absorbing an array of programs and procedures looking toward leadership and democratic organization among the blind.

That was the week of action and accomplishment: of the president's report, the White Cane report, the Washington congressional report, and the state reports on the progress of legislation ... of important resolutions on a dozen political and social fronts ... of meetings general and special: meetings of blind merchants, of teachers, of various national committees ... the week of succession of speeches and discussions tackling concrete problems and programs, bringing the issues into the open, closing the ranks on policy decisions and initiatives, moving the Federation onward...

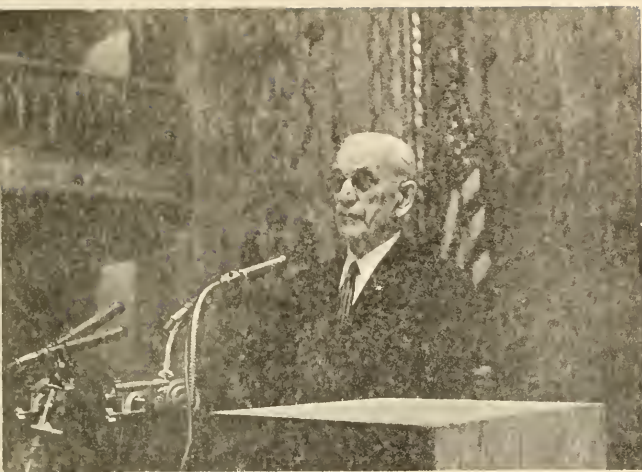
That was the week that was... the week that is a landmark in the history of the organized blind... the week that will be remembered by all who were there with pleasure, with purpose, and with pride.

HOUSE SPEAKER MCCORMACK KEYNOTES CONVENTION

The 1965 convention reached its first dramatic climax in the early moments of the opening day, July 6, with the appearance of the distinguished keynote speaker -- Democratic Congressman John W. McCormack of Massachusetts, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

When the tall, graying figure -- one of the half-dozen most prominent figures in our federal government -- strode into the convention hall arm-in-arm with John Nagle, he was greeted by a standing ovation that visibly moved and delighted him. He shook hands warmly with the Federation's officers gathered on the platform, posed willingly for a host of photographers both professional and amateur, and listened alertly to the introductory remarks of President Russ Kletzing -- who referred to the distinction of the Speaker's career in Congress and to the distinction he had conferred upon the organized blind by accepting their invitation to address the convention.

The veteran Congressman from New England then rose to another round of applause. "This is the first time I have attended a meeting of your organization," he said. "But that does not mean I am unfamiliar with the organized blind movement, or with your fine goals



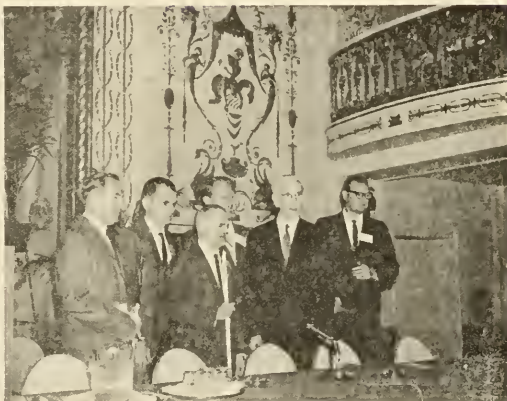
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

John W. McCormack, greeted with a thundering ovation from an audience of nearly 1,000 Federationists, prepares to address the opening-day session of the NFB's Washington convention. (Picture at left.)

SMILE, PLEASE. . .

Congressman McCormack poses with Federationists following his convention speech.

From left: First V-P Ken Jernigan, President Russ Kletzing, John Nagle, President Emeritus Jacobus tenBroek, Rep. McCormack, and Floyd Matson. (Picture at right.)



ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE:

Attentive listeners to the convention's keynote address by the Speaker of the House of Representatives are Messrs. tenBroek, Jernigan, and Nagle. (Picture at left.)

and high purposes."

He spoke of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts, and the impact it has had upon the state and upon the development of services for the blind. He made note of "The successful battles the organized blind of Massachusetts have waged in support of John Mungovan," the director of the state's division for the blind.

The Congressman spoke with particular warmth of "my good and dear friend John Nagle," his fellow Massachusettan who heads the Federation's Washington office: "No other organization, no other group of people, has a better, more forceful and energetic spokesman in the nation's capital than have you."

Then he shifted to the main theme of his keynote address. "As a group, congressmen and senators are a kind-hearted lot, and we want to help unfortunate people -- particularly, we want to help people who have the misfortune to be blind.

"Our usual response to the condition of blindness is sympathy -- and charity. Our inclination is to shelter you from the hazards of today's traffic, to remove the need for you to seek jobs in competition with sighted people.

"Our inclination, in short, is to make life easier for you, to shield and protect the blind from further unhappiness and struggle. And we would do all this in the sincere belief that we were helping you and being kind to you -- that we were doing what is best for you," Congressman McCormack said.

"But the National Federation of the Blind keeps us in Congress from committing this folly of well-intentioned and misdirected kindness. You, as an organization of blind people, tell us what is best for the blind-- and you speak with absolute authority on this subject.

"Since you are blind people, you know best what the blind want. You know best what is best for the blind.

"Your determined efforts to live normal lives is most commendable, and I congratulate you for your courage and fine spirit of independence. No one would judge you harshly, no one would condemn you, if you were to accept dependency upon others as your regular way of life. But you have refused the easy and dependent way, and are striving to achieve self-sufficiency and dependence upon yourselves.

"You could very well plead for charity -- and we in Congress would try to provide for your every need, that you might be comfortable and safe and untroubled in your lives.

"You could very well plead for special preferences, arguing that because you are blind you are helpless and in need of such special considerations -- but you have refused to do this!

"Rather, you ask only for the same consideration, only for the same rights and opportunities -- yes, and you insist upon sharing the same obligations and responsibilities that are available to sighted Americans -- and we in Congress will do our utmost to grant your wish."

The distinguished Speaker of the House emphasized to the convention that the effectiveness of the Federation's efforts in Congress depends upon the degree of commitment and participation on the part of its members.

"However much we may wish to help you, however willing and anxious we in Congress are to enact the kind of legislation that will be beneficial to blind people, we can only act wisely and serve your best interests when we hear from you -- when we learn from you what you really want, and the kind of help from us you truly need.

"Of course, John Nagle appears before our committees and discusses your legislative proposals, but this is not enough. In any congressional hearing, John is only one of many witnesses to testify, and your organization's point of view is but one of many that a committee must consider. The competition in Washington for favorable consideration of programs and proposals is very great, and the National Federation of the Blind could and would accomplish even more than it has in Congress through the active and vigorous support of you, its members.

"By 'support' I mean that you should send letters to your congressmen and senators, explaining the importance of your organization's bills to all blind people -- and especially to you, their constituent. Don't fail to write because you can't use fancy words. We in Congress are much more impressed by simple, straightforward letters from our constituents than we are by glossy brochures prepared by professional promoters.

"Don't fail to let your representatives in Congress know your views on matters pending before Congress because you may feel they are too busy or too important to pay attention to what you think. You, the voting citizen, are the 'important' person in our democratic system of government."

The veteran congressional leader, who holds the highest rank in the House of Representatives, then added jocularly that he hoped he would not sound "like a high-school civics teacher lecturing his class." But he said that it was important to emphasize that "the National Federation of the Blind, and organizations similar to it, are essential instrumentalities in a democratic society such as ours.

"The National Federation serves as a forum for the blind of America -- a clearing-house for ideas concerning blindness, and a common meeting-place where experiences may be shared and where the newly blinded may find new hope and much-needed help from their more experienced fellow blind.

"Here in your convention votes are taken and resolutions adopted after full discussion and debate -- and a consensus is reached based upon a cross-section of backgrounds, attitudes and thoughts. Thus the decisions you arrive at do not reflect only the thinking of a special category or group but represent the needs and values of the entire blind population -- and refer to the common difficulties encountered by all who are blind."

Congressman McCormack, whose voice and countenance has become familiar to a generation of television viewers, drew cheers at many points during his forceful address. One such point came when he referred to the famous struggle of the American blind for the right to organize:

"The right of self-organization is a right inherent in American citizenship, and is not dependent for its existence upon visual acuity," he declared. "Let no one think that a blind American is in any way less a citizen than a sighted American!"

"Let no one deny to the blind or disabled person the right to join with whom he chooses, free from intimidation and interference. Let no one deny him the right to speak as he chooses, free from fear, free from the threat that he will lose benefits that are rightfully his in law and in conscience.

"But it is not enough to possess rights: we must actually exercise them. And it is this that you, the members of the National Federation of the Blind, have done and are doing. You are functioning, participating citizens, as you meet here in national convention and deliberate upon the matters that concern you. You are setting a fine example for all America to follow."

The Speaker of the House of Representatives concluded his keynote address by thanking the convention delegates for inviting him to appear

before them.

"No other invitation has ever pleased me as much," he said. "And let me assure you again that I am sincerely and deeply interested in your determined efforts to help yourselves, and that I shall always be available to give what assistance I can.

"I shall always respond to your requests for help with personal pride -- for I believe that you are special people, not because you are blind, but because you have the courage to want to work for independence, and because you have the will and determination to achieve it."

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: HONORARY PRESIDENT OF NFB

"For 25 years you have proven what private individuals, united in a common cause, can achieve for their country and for their fellow citizens. . . . You have helped to build a whole new climate of opinion and understanding in this country. . . .

"You have never hoisted a white flag of surrender. Instead you have made the white cane a symbol of courage and nobility -- and of independence. For all this, I commend you. America is proud of you.

"The proof of your achievement is that what once had been private goals -- your goals -- have now become public, official goals: our goals as a nation."

With these words the NFB convention was greeted on the afternoon of July 7 by a man whose electric vitality and exuberant warmth reached out across the rostrum to embrace every member of his audience.

The Vice President of the United States, Hubert H. Humphrey, had come to the convention to accept the Federation's Newel Perry Award. When he left he took with him another and greater prize: he had won the admiration and friendship of a thousand federationists.

The response of the audience to the man and his contributions was symbolized when Russ Kletzing took the microphone, immediately after the Vice President's address, and conferred upon him the official title of Honorary President of the National Federation.

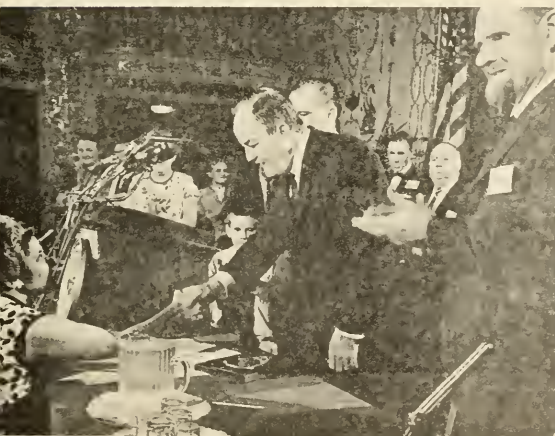


THE VICE PRESIDENT

of the United States -- and Honorary President of the National Federation of the Blind -- Hubert H. Humphrey, pictured as he addresses the NFB convention. (Picture at left.)

STATESMAN IS PINNED:

Vice President Humphrey receives the NFB's emblem from Anna ten-Broek, as the young lady's father beams approval, at right, and Russ Kletzing waits his turn at mike. (Picture at right.)



HANDS ACROSS THE TABLE.

Mrs. William Hogan of Connecticut shakes hands with the Vice President of the U.S. following his speech and acceptance of the NFB's Newel Perry Award. (Picture at left.)

It was a fitting climax to a memorable event -- an afternoon marked by two speeches of moving eloquence -- one by Vice President Humphrey and the other by NFB President Kletzing.

"Few in the history of the Newel Perry Award have so richly deserved our tribute and our thanks as the man we honor," Kletzing said in his presentation speech. "His name itself is virtually synonymous with the major goals and aspirations of our movement. They are incorporated in the various public aid bills he has sponsored.

"Through the leadership of men like Hubert Humphrey -- few in number, great in accomplishment -- his generation of Americans has kept its rendezvous with destiny. For it is his generation of public servants and creative representatives who first gave birth to the concept in this country of social security and modern public welfare; and it is his generation which has brought that grand and tender idea through the fires of hostility and reaction to its present confident maturity."

President Kletzing cited the Minnesota statesman for his "distinguished service in the war against poverty and needless need -- the continuing battle against what might be called the modern 'Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.'

"The names of those fabled horsemen, symbolizing the evils of war, may have changed since Biblical times, but their insidious character remain the same. In their classic form they wore the mantles of Famine, Pestilence, Conquest and Death.

"Today they ride abroad in the land under different cloaks: in place of famine, malnutrition; in place of pestilence, submarginal conditions of health and medical care; in place of conquest, the social devastation and defeat of those in need; and in place of death, the death-in-life of futility and dependency, the rotting of moral fiber and the deterioration of the spirit born of forcible retirement and exclusion from the ordinary channels of life and livelihood."

The Federation's president asserted that "In the modern war of welfare, these are the enemies of us all. These are the hooded horsemen whose ominous tread is heard wherever the Anti-Welfare Klan rides by night in the counties and precincts of our state and nation -- crying vengeance on the poor, the handicapped, the indigent and the simple who dare to seek the protection of our welfare laws and programs.

"These are the public enemies, Numbers One through Four, who are better known to us under older garbs: Prejudice, Demagoguery,

Superstition and Ignorance. Together they characterize, as they have always done, the rampant forces of revenge, retaliation, and retreat. . .

"One may truly say of the many measures of Hubert Humphrey that they are the measure of the man. They do not, of course, begin to comprehend all that he has done for the cause of welfare; but they epitomize the character of his contribution. Because he is a believer in us, he has made us all believers in him -- and in ourselves."

Then, holding in his hand the glittering plaque of brass and walnut symbolizing the Federation's highest award, President Kletzing addressed the Vice President:

"To the Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey -- friend of the blind -- defender of the public interest -- champion of the handicapped and disadvantaged -- wise statesman of welfare and true servant of the people -- the National Federation of the Blind presents its Newel Perry Award."

Before beginning his own speech, the Vice President stood for a long moment at the rostrum, reading the inscription on the award plaque, waiting for the tumultuous wave of applause to subside. When he finally spoke, his words were restrained and his expression solemn, as he ignored the written text before him.

"May I just take this early moment in my remarks, Russell, to thank you and the Federation for this citation and award," he began. "It is very difficult to know how to express one's gratitude and appreciation for such an honor, because I do consider it a very special honor."

"I do want each and every one of you, the officers and leaders of this great movement, to know that I cherish and shall continue to cherish this citation, and I accept it not only in the spirit in which it is given, as an expression of your kindness to me -- but on behalf of the many members of Congress and people in public life who have worked to improve the conditions under which people live, and have given of their time and efforts toward the improvement of social welfare."

Looking out over the wildly applauding audience which crowded the convention hall, the Vice President continued -- "I thought you would like to know that the President of the United States wanted me, in the very first words of my address today, especially to bring to you his warm personal greetings and wishes, and his thanks that you are here in Washington, D.C., to give us this uplift."

Later in his address Vice President Humphrey declared that he had met no less than three times with "your fine conventions, national or state. Eighteen years ago, as mayor of Minneapolis, I welcomed your members to that great city for your seventh annual convention.

"Five years ago, as U.S. Senator from Minnesota, I attended another very enthusiastic convention -- of the United Blind of Minnesota. And today I am so proud to meet with you again, proud to receive your plaque, to greet so many old, dear friends and I hope to make new ones."

The major theme of the Vice President's speech was that of "building the Great Society . . . of opening gates which had been closed -- because of race, creed, color or sex, because of poverty, illness or disability."

Today, he said, the nation is "fulfilling many of the hopes, yes, the visions, of your own Federation and of other pioneering organizations. Your great founder Jacobus tenBroek had this vision. He had a gift of foresight -- which others who had the blessing of physical sight did not possess.

"And your dynamic Washington representative, my friend, John F. Nagle, has helped turn vision into reality by his devoted efforts."

The Vice President declared that the Federation's members have demonstrated the invincible power of the spirit. They have proven their ability to conquer a physical lack, to live normal lives, indeed, often extra-ordinarily productive lives.

"Your Federation had compiled a remarkable and fruitful record -- nationally, in the states, cities, and rural areas. You have brought hope to countless thousands of the blind where, before, there had been so much hopelessness. You have encouraged self-help by the blind in place of dependency."

Humphrey emphasized that "among many other good battles the Federation has fought for a victory that will soon be ours -- the triumph of the omnibus bill known as medicare." He pointed out that "under a new title 19 of the Social Security Act, state medical assistance to the needy will be greatly expanded, diversified and liberalized: restrictions of the means test will be eased."

Although warning that the medicare bill would not "satisfy every need of the blind or others," the Vice President called it "a long step

forward" and added:

"Your Federation has taken many, many steps forward. You have come a long way. And I regard it as a great honor to have walked with you and worked with you

"Long may the Federation flourish in its service, in its leadership. Long may the courageous blind help to lead a courageous America to a better life for all."

With those parting words, the Vice President of the United States stepped back from the rostrum to the tumultuous cheers of the standing audience. But his appearance was not yet over. As soon as he could be heard, President Kletzing seized the microphone and, proffering the Federation button from his own lapel, conferred yet another honor upon the statesman from Minnesota: the title of "Honorary President of the National Federation of the Blind."

Even after the applause which greeted that surprise announcement had subsided, the Vice President was not prepared to leave. For many minutes longer, under the watchful eyes of a covey of Secret Service agents assigned to guard him, he lingered on the platform to shake hands, sign autographs, and pose for the press photographers and TV cameramen who surrounded the stage.

At last, accompanied by Russ Kletzing and John Nagle, the nation's second-ranking public official moved off the platform, through the doors of the ballroom, and off to another place and another mission in the service of his Chief Executive and the nation.

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANQUET

"You and your Federation are an inspiration to all of us in Congress -- through your friendliness, your warmth, your unselfishness, your faith, and your eminently decent objectives. We are truly better citizens because of you, and we salute you."

That brief but eloquent tribute -- an impromptu utterance of Senator Jack Miller of Iowa -- aptly summarizes the sentiments of 103 members of the United States Congress who found themselves on the evening of Thursday, July 8, taking an active part in a spectacular banquet unlike



BANQUET SCENE.

Master of Ceremonies Ken Jernigan presides at the gala convention banquet, featuring more than 100 members of Congress. (Picture at left.)

MAIN ADDRESS

at the banquet was delivered by the NFB's founder and President Emeritus, Jacobus tenBroek. (Picture at right.)



A TYPICAL TABLE of Federationists and congressional guests, pictured against a background of 600 banqueters. (Puzzle: find Perry Sundquist, Jim McGinnis, and Muzzy Marcellino.) (Picture at left.)

any other in their experience.

For several days preceding that gala dinner, Federationists had been flocking to the Capitol offices of their senators and representatives in such numbers that one lawmaker was moved to remark that "a convention of the blind must be going on in the House Office Building." Besides pressing their congressmen to support various pending bills to improve blind welfare, these constituents were also issuing invitations to the convention banquet.

The success of their persuasive efforts was all but overwhelming. As early as 6:30 on the evening of the dinner, the delegates and their congressional guests began filing into the hotel's main ballroom -- magically transformed within a couple of hours from a meeting-hall into a vast dining salon. An hour later some 700 persons were comfortably seated at 70-odd tables, attacking the fresh fruit au Kirsch and the breast of capon on Kentucky ham.

"Mr. Chairman, I mean no offense to the other congressional speakers who have come before me and who will follow me -- but the best speaking we have heard in years has come from the head table at this banquet: from you, sir, from your present president Russ Kletzing, and from your distinguished banquet speaker, Dr. tenBroek."

So said Nevada's Senator Alan Bible to Master of Ceremonies Ken Jernigan, in his 30-second turn at the microphone. One by one, from Alabama to Wyoming, the members of Congress present were called upon by Ken -- as the banquet's final piece de resistance -- to say a few words of greeting. What might well have become an ordeal by oratory, either for the elective officials or for their audience, was converted by the fact and skill of the toastmaster, and the abilities of the Congressmen, into a dramatic episode at once lighthearted and inspirational.

That dual note was neatly struck by Congressman Lloyd Meads of Washington, one of the last of the guests to speak: "While the state of Washington has many attributes," he said, "its position in the alphabet leaves something to be desired: I've had four speeches stolen from me already. But all of us here have been greatly impressed by the events this evening. Two words in particular keep coming back to me: inspiration and vision. I know we've all been inspired by the example you have given us; and I'm sure we shall all leave here tonight with more and better vision."

The theme of inspiration and of vision, stressed again and again by the Federation's congressional guests, was firmly established earlier

in the evening by the historic banquet speech of Dr. tenBroek, which bore the title "The Federation at Twenty-Five." (The text of his speech, which was subsequently printed in The Congressional Record, is set forth in its entirety at the end of the present issue.) Something of the quality of that address may be gleaned from the comment of one congressman, Edward R. Royball of California: "This was the most outstanding speech I have ever heard. May I suggest that it be written up and sent to every member of Congress, both House and Senate, to every member of every state legislature, and to every member of our city councils throughout the country. I want them all to be proud of whatever contribution they have made to this magnificent movement."

Dr. tenBroek began his address by emphasizing that the career of the National Federation has never been a tranquil one: "It has grown to maturity the hard way. . . . It has been attacked by agencies and administrators -- and learned to fight back. It has been scolded by guardians and caretakers -- and learned to talk back Most important of all, it has never stopped moving, never stopped battling, never stopped marching toward its goals of security, equality and opportunity for all the nation's blind."

Looking back over a quarter-century of federationism -- a history which he more than any other had helped to make -- the NFB's founder and now President Emeritus divided the record of upward movement into three phases -- "corresponding to the first decade, the second decade, and the third half-decade of our existence as an organization."

He recalled the struggles of the forties "when the workers were few and the cupboard was bare -- and when as he received his university instructor's salary "Hazel and I would distribute it among the necessities of life: food, clothing, rent, federation stamps, mimeograph paper and ink."

Later on the successes of the Federation, in growth and accomplishment, altered its image drastically, Dr. tenBroek said.

"As the organized blind movement grew in affluence and influence, as affiliates sprang up in state after state, county after county, across the land, as a groundswell of protest rose against the dead ends of sheltered employment and segregated training, of welfare programs tied to the poor law and social workers bound up in red tape, the forces of custodialism and control looked down from their lighthouses and fought back."

Dr. tenBroek noted that struggles both external and internal left the Federation at the end of the fifties "shaken in its unity, depleted in

resources and diminished in membership." But he declared that "during the five years just past we have regained stability, recovered unity, and preserved democracy.

"We have found new and dynamic leadership, in the person of a president imbued with youth and creative vigor. We have regained our fund raiser -- the wizard of St. Louis -- and with him has come the prospect of renewed resources. We have restored and rejuvenated the BRAILLE MONITOR, as not only the voice but the clarion call of the federated blind. We have reached across the seas, extending the hand of brotherhood and the vision of federationism to blind people the world over."

The theme of vision and inspiration which characterized Dr. tenBroek's address was evident also in the introductory speech delivered by Ken Jernigan. In contrast to the humor and gaiety of his performance later in the evening, Ken spoke in serious vein of the "spiritual side" of the organized blind movement and of the embodiment of that spirit in the person of Dr. tenBroek.

More than one congressman, following the two Federation speakers, returned to that theme in his remarks. "The nation as a whole could well be guided by the wonderful example of achievement and spirit that moves this great organization," said Hawaii's Congresswoman Patsy Mink.

And a representative from Iowa, John R. Schmidhauser, added: "Congressmen come to events like this in order to be of help; but in this case it is you who have been helpful to us because of your courage, your compassion, and your inner strength."

Nor was it only the congressmen present at the banquet who felt uplifted by the evening's experience. The many hundreds of Federationists in the room, who had listened intently throughout Dr. tenBroek's address, were stirred again and again to applause by its climactic sentences -- a series of short declarations of faith that the Federation will prevail over remaining handicaps as it has prevailed over obstacles and opponents in its past.

"We have prevailed over the limitations of blindness, in our lives and in our movement," Dr. tenBroek asserted. "We shall prevail over the handicap of blindness in all its forms: not the physical disability, which is an act of nature that may not be repealed, but the social handicap which is an act of men that men may counteract.

"We have prevailed, in our movement and our minds, over the myth of the helpless blind man. We shall prevail over that myth of

helplessness in the minds of all who have sight but have not vision . . .

"We shall prevail because we have demonstrated to the world and to ourselves that the blind possess the strength to stand together and to walk alone: the capacity to speak for themselves and to be heard with respect; the resolute determination of a common purpose and democratic cause; the faith that can move mountains -- and mount movements."

That affirmative message from the Federation's founder was clearly not lost on his audience of influential public servants. Said South Dakota's Senator Ben Reifel, when his turn came at the microphone: "You have come to Washington -- you have conquered our hearts -- and I know you have won our support in helping you and your great organization to prevail."

Here -- to close the account of the "Star-Spangled banquet" -- are a few more congressional observations, culled from the many accolades and lighter remarks expressed during the marathon meal that made history:

Congressman James F. Baldwin of California: "It was my privilege to spend three years in law school as a classmate of your president, Russ Kletzing. I want to congratulate the members of this group for your foresight and wisdom in electing Russ. He was a most impressive classmate in law school, and time and time again my admiration grew for the outstanding work he did in our class. He won the respect and admiration of all of us; and I am glad to see that you have given him the same respect and admiration."

Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii: "This has been a most inspiring evening. In Hawaii most of us, like you, try to see not only with our eyes but with our hearts, in the true spirit of aloha."

Congressman John Culver of Iowa: "It is not unusual for congressmen to be inspired here in Washington. But I want to express our appreciation for the opportunity to come here and to be inspired as rarely before."

Congressman Ancher Nelsen of Minnesota: "We as a nation, and we in Congress, would be very lucky if we had your vision and your courage. One of the objectives you seek is opportunity -- a quality that has made our country great -- and we hope that we may be able to assist you in achieving that goal."

Congressman Phillip Burton of California: "I want to say that after tomorrow, when the Senate passes the Hartke bill, I am looking

forward to working again with Russ Kletzing and Chick tenBroek just as I did in the California Council of the Blind back home."

Senator Paul Fannin of Arizona: "One year after hosting your convention at Phoenix, as governor of that state -- and we gave you a warm welcome, about 108 degrees -- it is a privilege to have another chance to commend your great leaders for their work in this country and throughout the world."

Congressman Harlan Hagen of California: "Chick's speech was one of the most wonderful I have heard anywhere; and with only a few changes of wording it would be adaptable to many comparable situations in other important organizations."

Congressman Spark M. Matsunaga of Hawaii: "In a sense I too am blind, because as a native of Hawaii I am imbued with the spirit of aloha -- meaning that I love my fellow men -- and love as you know is blind."

Senator Alan Bible of Nevada: "I am proud to report that our state has a full, 100 percent delegation here with you tonight; and I would bet (since I come from a betting state) that we also have the largest delegation per capita that has come the greatest distance."

Congressman Jeffrey Cohelan of California: "As a former student at the University of California, I am moved to say that Chick tenBroek never taught me how to make a thirty-second speech."

Congressman J. Arthur Younger of California: "Thank you for the privilege of breaking bread with the happiest group of people I have met with here in Washington."

FEDERATIONISTS TOUR THE CAPITAL

(From the WASHINGTON POST, July 8, 1965)

Like all sightseers, they talked about Washington's humid weather, their sons at college and their hotel accommodations. Yet for the blind people who went on a bus tour of Washington yesterday afternoon, the experience was not the same.

Sounds and feelings constitute the city of Washington for these blind people, in town to attend the convention of the National Federation of the Blind at the Mayflower Hotel. When they needed to read a sign yesterday, they asked a passerby to read it for them.

"When you ask someone to read something for you," said Jim Gashel of Mason City, Iowa, "You are just borrowing someone else's eyes for a moment. Otherwise, you try to see things in some other ways."

At Lincoln Memorial, some went up to feel the marble base, carefully lifting their metal walking sticks to trace the outlines of Lincoln's feet.

James B. Fall of Phoenix, Arizona., who had once seen the Memorial before he lost his vision, said "Years ago, I was happy to see this great monument with my own eyes. Today, I'm just as happy to feel it with my hands."

At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the group became silent as the changing of the guard ceremony approached.

The visitors listened as the clicking of the soldiers' heels and the banging of the rifles resounded over the hushed crowd around the Tomb.

Several wondered later how the soldiers made so much noise with their heels. The bus guide pointed out that they were lined with steel, to add to the dignity of the ceremony.

At the Washington Monument, most of the group rode to the top of the elevator, but a few decided to chance the 898 steps to the top. Those who climbed did not count steps, but used walking sticks to guide their way.

At the observation deck, a guide described the magnificent view in four directions. As he turned, the group turned with the sound of his voice, some asking questions, but most silently taking in every word.

On the way back to the hotel, the tourists reviewed their busy afternoon. One of them, Ray Benson, of Elma, Iowa, concluded that Washington had a much greater variety of life than his home town.

"It's also a lot more humid and noisy," he said.

REPRESENTATIVE BARING INSPIRES CONVENTION

Congressman Walter S. Baring of Nevada -- famed among the blind of America as co-author of the Kennedy-Baring bill -- was one of the most welcome of the Federation's distinguished guest speakers at the Washington convention. Long a vigorous champion of enlightened programs for the blind, well-remembered for his testimony six years ago at congressional hearings on the right to organize, the handsome Nevada legislator has been the author over the years of numerous bills designed to strike down discriminatory barriers such as those of residence and relatives' responsibility.

Congressman Baring received an especially warm ovation -- the tribute of the organized blind to a staunch friend and ally -- as he strode to the platform on the afternoon of July 6, in the company of his veteran administrative assistant, Tim Seward.

"Yours is a very special kind of organization," he told the group. "It is made up of men and women disadvantaged socially and economically by lack of sight. You might well accept this as an excuse for dependence upon others -- saying, 'Wait upon me, for I am blind.'"

"But you of the Federation have not done that or said that. Instead you have joined your individual needs and talents into a common effort calling for common action -- not that you might be made more comfortable in dependence, but that you might be made more competitive in independence.

"You have not pleaded for charity; rather you have demanded a recognition of your right to equal opportunity. You have not complained bitterly that life owes you a living because you are blind. Rather you have protested at discriminations that deny you a fair chance for constructive work at decent wages.

"You of the National Federation of the Blind have insisted only that life owes you a chance to use your talents and abilities for your own improvement, for the benefit of your family, and for the enrichment of the nation," the Nevada congressman declared.

He emphasized again that in today's world "yours is a very uncommon kind of organization: one that is not working for special preferences or favors, but only for the right to do as others do, to work as others do, to live as others do.

"And if yours is a special kind of federation, you are a special kind of people -- for you have a cause and an ideal and are prepared to

battle for it. The successes of your organization in its struggles across the country and in Congress have been many, and they have been substantial," he said.

"But even greater than the satisfaction that comes from winning, is the pride that comes from striving -- however adverse the odds and uphill the road. To accept conditions as they are, to become resigned to one's fate and circumstances, is to live without purpose or meaning. But to challenge fate, to take control of life and strive to turn misfortune into good fortune -- to reject the reality of what is, in order to change it into a dream that ought to be -- this, my friends, is to live with purpose and with pride.

"That is the great contribution of the National Federation of the Blind -- that it has given blind people a chance to achieve dignity in their own lives and in their collective undertakings.

"The Federation has given blind men and women the opportunity to work together toward the realization of high purposes. It has given them a chance to demonstrate their high abilities and competence -- and as you in your organization have demonstrated this, all blind people everywhere have gained from your efforts."

The Nevada legislator concluded his address by stressing that "I am not for you -- I am with you. I am with you because I believe in your cause; and I believe in it because it is our cause, the cause of all America."

ALL'S QUIET TONIGHT ALONG THE POTOMAC

By Floyd S. Field
President, Niagara Chapter,
Empire State Association of the Blind

All's quiet tonight along the Potomac!

Where Generals McClellan and Mead reviewed their troops: where General Grant marched his victorious army past the White House: where the Drummer Boy of the Rappahannock played his dirge as President Andrew Johnson bade farewell to the martyred Lincoln when his body left the railroad station on the first Pullman on his sad trip back to Illinois.

"All this a century ago: one hundred years of winter's snow on Lincoln's grave, as all heroes of Blue and Gray are now laid peacefully away."

All's quiet tonight along the Potomac!

Where five-score and no years later another President Johnson seeks rest in Texas as the twenty-fifth annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind concludes its conclave at the Mayflower: where for one hour Toastmaster Ken Jernigan ruled members of Congress with an iron hand, allowing each the unheard-of cloture time of thirty seconds -- and bringing out humor most of us thought impossible. "I yield you thirty seconds, Mr. Congressman" -- and one replied: "With Ken as Speaker, the House would be in adjournment by March." Where Founder Jacobus tenBroek told in a masterful speech of the first twenty-five years of the National Federation: of its establishment and battles, its victories and defeats, its progress and firm foundation.

All's quiet tonight along the Potomac!

In the ballroom where President Russell Kletzing presided: and where Convention Chairman Ken Jernigan gave daily prizes to those present at the right time: and where International President tenBroek and our General of the Foreign Armies, Isabelle Grant, told of progress of the independent blind around the world: of Fatima Shah, in Pakistan, too busy serving her fellow blind to hold her new grandchild on her lap, and of how we may assist her and others.

All's quiet tonight along the Potomac!

Where the featured tour brought busloads of blind people and guides to visit the Lincoln Memorial; the Arlington National Cemetery where they saw the "Changing of the Guard" and with special permission used the path of the Kennedy family in visiting the grave of the martyred President, standing there in reverence; and visiting the 555-foot monument to the Father of Our Country; while others toured the Capitol, the Senate chambers, the Smithsonian Institution, and even tried to converse with life-size dummies in the famous wax museum.

All's quiet along the Potomac!

Where the annual financial report was distributed and made less dry by the distribution of water by members of a chapter named for another mighty river -- to NFB officials, foreign visitors and presidents of state affiliates -- even putting a few drops in the Mayflower fountain.

And thus concluded the twenty-fifth Anniversary Convention of the Federation -- said to have had the very highest esprit de corps -- its delegates returning to resume their work for the blind in Hawaii and Alaska, in Maine and Texas, in California and West Virginia, and in a total of 36 sovereign states -- but with many taking time to attend a seminar on Problems of the Sightless at the University of Maryland. And as the honor guard is changed regularly at Arlington; and the eternal flame, kindled by Jackie, burns steadily on the grave of the late President; and until hordes of Shriners take over our nation's Capital:

All's quiet tonight along the Potomac!

THE HARTKE DEMONSTRATION: A HISTORY

Of all the dramatic episodes involving blind Americans enacted during the Washington convention, the most significant was one which took place not in the Mayflower Hotel but in the United States Senate.

It began with a mass migration of hundreds of Federationists to the Capitol on Thursday afternoon, July 8, to lend physical and moral support to the fight being waged on the Senate floor by Senator Vance Hartke and 43 of his colleagues for passage of the Federation's bill to improve provisions of the disability insurance law for blind persons.

The Federation was also supported in this campaign by the American Foundation for the Blind, the Blind Veterans Association, and the American Association of Workers for the Blind.

No one can say for certain what effect the presence of those hundreds of blind men and women in the galleries, the offices and the corridors of the Capitol had upon the debating legislators within. But history will record that on the next day -- July 9, 1965 -- the Senate overwhelmingly passed the Hartke disability amendment by a vote of 78 to 11.

Following that action the measure went to a joint conference committee of the House and Senate, where it was drastically modified before being sent upward -- together with the whole of the social security "medicare" bill -- for the Presidential signature which turned it into law on July 30.

Those are the bare facts of the "Hartke Story." Behind them lies

a lengthier narrative of actions and passions, whose principal heroes are Vance Hartke and Hubert H. Humphrey -- but whose unsung heroes are the hundreds of Federation members who literally "marched on the Capitol" to defend their interests and to make their voices heard.

For many years the National Federation has fought for the enactment of legislation to reform disability insurance provisions for the blind-- in terms of a more realistic definition of blindness and to circumvent the discriminatory exclusion of newly blinded persons and those with less than 20 quarters of covered employment.

The first substantial breakthrough occurred last fall when the Senate unanimously passed the "Humphrey amendment" introduced and championed by then-Senator Hubert Humphrey. In an eloquent speech in the Senate on September 3, the famed Minnesotan spelled out the purpose of his bill:

"My amendment would liberalize the federal disability insurance program for persons who are now blind -- and, perhaps of greater importance, it would make disability insurance payments more readily available to more persons who become blind at the time when blindness occurs."

He pointed out that the proposal would (1) incorporate the generally used definition of blindness into the provisions of the disability insurance law; (2) make it possible for a blind person who has worked in a social-security covered job for six quarters (a year and a half) to qualify for disability cash benefits, and (3) it would allow qualified blind persons "to draw disability cash benefits, and to continue to draw them, as long as they remain blind -- and irrespective of their income or earnings, if they are fortunate enough to be employed."

The Humphrey measure -- offered as an amendment to the Administration's social security bill -- was resoundingly approved by the Senate on a voice vote, without a single dissent -- raising high the hopes of blind people the nation over that victory at last was to be theirs.

That victory however became a hope deferred when Congress adjourned without taking action on the social security bill (which contained the controversial medicare proposals), thus effectively scuttling the disability amendment. But the fight was far from over. Senator Humphrey, who had meanwhile become Vice President Humphrey, sent a letter to Senator Hartke on November 29, requesting that the Indianan carry on in his behalf the struggle for a reformed disability program for the blind.

On April 13, Hartke rose in the Senate to introduce his bill and speak in its defense. "Mr. President," he said, "it has been my privilege to introduce and work for many measures for the benefit of the blind during the years since I first came to this body in 1958. Such legislation has been one of my special interests, and I would be pleased in any case to offer this legislation today. But it is a special pleasure to do so at the express request of the Vice President, whose election removed from him the opportunity to present the bill again as he would otherwise have done."

Senator Hartke was far from alone in his support of the liberalized disability bill. Some 41 colleagues officially joined him as co-sponsors (the total was 43 at the time of the vote); and the stage was set for the final battle on the Senate floor. That battle was joined on July 8, when blind Americans swarmed into the Capitol and made their presence known to the lawmakers on the floor.

The struggle continued into the next day, as Senator Hartke argued vigorously for his amendment in words at once dramatic and dignified:

"Our amendment recognizes that the severest of all consequences resulting from the occurrence of blindness in the life of a working person is not the physical loss, the deprivation of sight. Rather the severest loss is the economic disaster which befalls the newly blinded workman . . .

"It is these consequences -- the abrupt termination of weekly wages, the diminished earning power, the drastically curtailed employment opportunities open to the recently blinded person, or to the person who has lived a lifetime without sight -- these convert the physical disability of blindness into the economic handicap of blindness . . .

"This amendment would be of immeasurable help to the worker suddenly confronted by the devastating effects of blindness -- the discouragements of protracted unemployment, the despair of an expected lifetime of unemployment, the shocking loss of independence, the hurts and humiliations of dependency."

Senator Hartke's impassioned plea was promptly and coldly countered by the chief spokesman for the opposition: Senator Russell Long of Louisiana, floor leader for the Administration's general medicare bill.

"This is what is wrong with the amendment," he asserted. "It declares to be blind, persons who are not completely blind. It provides

disability benefits for persons who are not disabled. It pays disability benefits to people who are working full time. . . We are talking about persons under the age of 65 who claim to be disabled, although they are not. . . . The amendment would cost a large amount of money -- \$287 million a year on the average over future years -- to do something that we ought not to do. . . . I know the House will not accept the amendment, and I frankly think the Senate ought not to take it. "

Senator Hartke rose immediately to challenge these allegations. The bill had been agreed to unanimously by the Senate last year: "and not a Senator voted against it. Why should the Senate in one year say it will accept the amendment, and the next year refuse to accept it? The mere fact that the House of Representatives does not want the amendment is no reason for the Senate to refuse to accept it. . . . I do not propose to surrender everything to the House. . . . Let us go all the way down the road.

"It will cost money? We agree that it will cost money. But I would not trade \$287 million for my eyes, let alone the eyes of the blind. The Senator speaks about individuals who claim blindness. It will then be necessary to change every Federal statute, because the amendment conforms with the federal law concerning blindness under the Internal Revenue Code.

"What the Senator is saying is that those people are cheaters. I do not believe they are cheaters. I believe they are trying to make a decent living; that they want to go forward and make their way. But we are denying them the opportunity to do so by saying that they will not be able to come under social security for a long period of time. We are asking them to place themselves in the hands of charity."

At that point Senator Ernest Gruening of Alaska, fresh from the Federation's convention banquet of the night before, rose to support the Hartke amendment. "Mr. President, no group of our citizens are more entitled to everything they can possibly get justly than the blind. It would be a tragedy if the Senate, the second time, failed to adopt the amendment. . . . We are told that the House does not want it. We are told that the House will not change its mind. But this is the Senate. I hope the Senate will go on record and accept the amendment."

To which Senator Hartke added: "To reject the amendment would be the sharpest rebuke we could deliver to the Vice President of the United States. . . . I do not believe this is a program that the Administration wishes to rebuke."

The reference to Vice President Humphrey brought another member of the opposition, Senator Clinton Anderson of New Mexico, to his feet. "I hope no Senator will be fooled by the characterization of a rebuke to the Vice President," he declared. "The Vice President, then a Senator from Minnesota, made certain representations on behalf of the amendment for the blind. We frankly did not know what the House would do. We said we would take the amendment to conference. We presented the facts to the conference committee. But the amendment was not kicked out by the House; it was kicked out on the basis of knowledge.

"We would be paying \$250 million for persons said to be blind, but who are not blind. Why go through the same motions?" Anderson concluded.

"I want to go through the motions," came the reply from Senator Hartke. "I think the Vice President wants us to go through them. He told me so last night. He told me to make a battle for the amendment on the floor of the Senate. If he were in the Senate, he could say so now. He is not opposed to the amendment."

Shortly thereafter an opposition spokesman, Senator George Smathers of Florida, presented a motion to table the Hartke amendment -- a motion which, if it passed, would have killed the amendment. And when the voice vote was heard, it seemed that the hopes of the nation's blind had once again been defeated. "It appears to the Chair," said the Presiding Officer, "that the 'ayes' have it and the motion to table is agreed to."

Fortunately, the matter did not end there. After some confusion -- much of it evidently caused by the dissatisfaction of the gallery audience -- a rollcall of yeas and nays was demanded on the tabling motion. The result sweepingly reversed the decision of the presiding officer: yeas 16, nays 76. Then a rollcall vote was taken on the Hartke amendment itself, resulting in an even stronger majority in favor: 78 against 11.

At that point it seemed to many observers, as the victorious measure was handed over to the joint House-Senate conference committee, that the Hartke amendment had won the day in all important features. But that happy ending was not to be. In stark violation of the clearcut sentiment and decision of the Senate, the conference committee took a butcher knife to the amendment -- leaving only a few reduced elements of the original proposal.

The emasculated character of the Hartke amendment, as it emerged from the slaughterhouse of the conference committee, is set forth in the article by Perry Sundquist which follows. But the unhappy ending of the "Hartke story" should not take away from the inspired and inspiring commitment on the part of so many to the battle for a reformed disability insurance program.

That battle has, at the present writing, been neither won nor lost. All that is certain is that it will continue.

THE 1965 AMENDMENTS TO THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

by

Perry Sundquist

Chief of the Division for the Blind, California Department of Social Welfare

When Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the original Social Security Act in 1935 he said that the bill was only the cornerstone of a structure which was by no means complete. How prophetically the President spoke! For scarcely any piece of legislation has undergone more change. The Social Security Act has been amended eight times in the past 30 years -- to broaden coverage and to increase benefits. Today some 90 percent of all adults are covered by its retirement programs. Late in July the Congress passed and sent to the President for his signature H.R. 6675 which is far more than the 1965 Amendments to the Social Security Act. This historic bill reshapes the entire system since it provides for the first time hospital and other medical benefits to recipients. In addition, this complex package raises all social security cash benefits, revamps the Federal-State programs for the medically needy and raises both social security taxes and the wage base sharply.

Under this law total benefits to be paid out will more than double during the next 25 years -- from \$17 billion this year to at least \$45 billion in 1990. The National Federation of the Blind's representative in Washington testified several times before congressional committees in all-out support of the passage of this historic bill, the major provisions of which are as follows:

1. Health Insurance for the Aged. The law adds a new Title XVIII to the Social Security Act which establishes two related health insurance programs for all persons 65 years of age or over. A so-called basic plan provides protection against the costs of hospital and related care, and a voluntary supplementary plan provides physicians' services and

other medical and health services to cover certain areas not covered by the basic plan. The basic plan will be financed through a separate payroll tax and separate trust fund. Benefits for persons currently over 65 who are not insured under the Social Security and Railroad Retirement systems will be financed out of general fund revenues. Enrollment in the supplementary plan will be voluntary, will be financed initially by a \$3.00 a month premium paid by the enrollee and an equal amount supplied by the Federal Government out of general revenues. The premiums for Social Security and Railroad Retirement beneficiaries who voluntarily enroll will be deducted from their monthly insurance benefits.

The basic plan will include inpatient hospital services for up to 60 days in each spell of illness with the patient paying a flat \$40 deductible amount, and up to an additional 30 days with the payment by the patient of \$10. a day. Hospital services will include all the ordinary services furnished by a hospital, but will not include private nursing or the services of physicians except services provided by interns or residents in training. Posthospital extended care (nursing home) will be provided after the patient is transferred from a hospital after at least a three-day stay, for up to 100 days for each spell of illness, with a \$5. a day payment by the patient after the first 20 days. Outpatient diagnostic services would be provided with the patient paying a 20 percent deductible amount for each diagnostic study. Also provided are posthospital home health services for up to 100 visits after discharge from a hospital or nursing home and before the beginning of a new spell of illness. These services would include intermittent nursing care, therapy, and a part-time home health aid attendant. A "spell of illness" would be considered to begin when the individual enters the hospital and end when he has not been an inpatient for 60 consecutive days.

A package of benefits supplementing those provided under the basic plan will be offered to all persons 65 and over on a voluntary basis under the supplementary plan. This supplementary plan will cover physicians' and dental surgeons' services, home health services, hospital services in psychiatric institutions, and numerous other medical and health benefits in and out of medical institutions. There will be an annual deductible of \$50. and the plan will cover 80 percent of the patient's bill above the deductible.

Benefits under both the basic and voluntary supplementary plans will become payable for services furnished in July, 1966 except for services in nursing homes for which benefits will first become payable in January, 1967.

2. Expanded Medical Care for Recipients. The law adds a new Title XIX to the Social Security Act which provides for the improvement

and expansion of medical care for recipients of aid. It establishes a single medical program not only for the aged but for all recipients of Aid to the Blind, Aid to the Totally Disabled and Aid to Families With Dependent Children, as well as to other persons who would qualify under these programs if in sufficient need, i. e., the so-called 'medically indigent'. This Title in effect extends coverage from the present program of Medical Assistance for the Aged and the Federal matching of 50 per cent in Old Age Assistance up to \$15. a month for medical care to include all recipients of the categorical aids, irrespective of their age or the cause of their dependency. The Federal Government will pay the medical percentage of all such costs, without any upper limit, the percentage depending on the per capita wealth of any given State and ranging from 50 percent for the wealthiest States to 83% for those States with the lower per capita incomes. After January 1, 1970 there can be no vendor payments for medical care paid for with Federal funds from funds appropriated for public assistance costs.

Under Title XIX a State must provide inpatient hospital services, out-patient hospital services, other laboratory and X-ray services, and physicians' services. Coverage of other items of medical service will be optional such as dental care, hearing aids and eye care. However, a State must show a gradual widening of its coverage over the years. The provisions of Title XIX will become effective January 1, 1966.

3. Old Age Survivors and Disability Insurance Amendments.

The law provides for a seven percent benefit increase effective retroactively to January 1, 1965, with a minimum increase of \$4 a month for retired workers. Minimum monthly benefits are increased from \$40 to \$44. The earnings base on which social security and hospital insurance taxes are levied is increased from \$4,800 to \$6,600 beginning in 1966. The amount of earnings which a retired worker can receive has been increased from \$1,200 to 1,500 and provides for expansion of the \$1 deduction for each \$2 of earnings band (above the fully exempt \$1,500) between \$1,500 and \$2,700. Widows are provided the option of receiving reduced benefits at age 60 if they choose not to wait until they reach age 62. Children between the ages of 18 and 22 are included for OASDI benefits if their parents are deceased, retired or disabled workers, provided such children are attending school full time.

The new law eliminates the present requirement that a worker's disability must be expected to result in death or to be of long-continued and indefinite duration. Instead, it provides that an insured worker will be eligible for disability benefits if he has been totally disabled throughout a continuous period of 12 months.

The National Federation of the Blind, acting in a common front with agencies for the blind and other organizations of the blind, waged an heroic battle significantly to liberalize the requirements for disability benefits when blindness was involved. For insured status under existing law, an individual (1) must have at least 20 quarters of coverage in the 40 quarters ending with the quarter in which the disability begins and (2) must be fully insured. An individual must also be precluded from engaging in any substantial gainful activity by reason of a physical or mental impairment. The following definition of blindness is deemed disabling for disability "freeze" purposes: Central visual acuity of 5/200 or less in the better eye or with a field of vision reduced to five degrees or less. The NFB and its allies succeeded in amending H. R. 6675 on the Senate floor to provide for disability benefits for any worker who had 6 quarters of coverage, acquired at any time, provided the worker met the standard ophthalmic definition of economic blindness, i. e., 20/200 central visual acuity or a field loss reduction of 20 degrees or less. The vote for adoption of this proposal on the Senate floor was 78 to 11. Nevertheless, the House-Senate Conference Committee substituted the following two provisions for the Senate amendment:

(1) Young workers who are blind and disabled: -- the law establishes an alternative insured status requirement for workers disabled before age 31 of one-half of the quarters elapsing after age 21 up to the point of disability with a minimum of 6 quarters. To qualify for this alternative the worker would have to meet the restrictive definition of blindness (5/200) and the other regular requirements for entitlement, including inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity. (2) Older workers who are blind and disabled: -- the law provides that those individuals aged 55 or over who meet the statutory definition of blindness in the disability "freeze" could qualify for cash benefits on the basis of their inability to engage in their past occupation or occupations. Their benefits would not be paid, however, if they were actually engaging in any substantial gainful activity.

While the new provisions with respect to blindness and disability benefits fall far short of what is needed and was diligently sought by the NFB, it can be readily seen that two very important steps forward have been taken: the heretofore inflexible rule of 20 quarters of minimum coverage has been reduced to 6 quarters for the young workers who are blind; and the older workers who are blind need merely be unable to engage in their past occupation rather than in any substantial gainful activity. Both of these are notable gains.

(4) Public Assistance Amendments. The Federal share in public assistance payments to the States is increased by an average of about \$2.50 a month. The formula for Federal matching in the adult programs

(Aid to the Blind, Old Age Assistance, and Aid to the Totally Disabled) is now 29/35ths of the first \$35 with between 50 percent and 66 percent (depending on the per capita wealth of each State) of the difference between \$35 and \$70. The new formula will be \$31 of the first \$37 with between 50 percent and 66 percent of the difference between \$37 and \$75. This increased Federal matching will be effective January 1, 1966.

The principle of exemption of income from earnings, pioneered by the NFB when it secured \$50 a month of exempt earnings from the Congress in 1950 by amendment to Title X, has now been extended to the other aid categories. The law will increase the amount of exempt earnings for Old Age Assistance recipients so that a State may, at its option, exempt the first \$20 a month (now \$10) and one-half of the next \$60 (now \$40). In Aid to Families with Dependent Children the law creates for the first time a family maximum of \$150 a month in exempt earnings with no one child having more than \$50 exempted. Also, for the first time in Aid to the Totally Disabled the law provides that at the option of the States the first \$20 a month in earnings may be exempt and one-half of the next \$60. In addition, any additional income and resources could be exempted as part of an approved plan to achieve self-support (as is the case under existing law in the Aid to the Blind program). There is also a provision which would allow States, at their option, to exempt income from any source for all public assistance programs in the amount of \$5 a month. This would permit the States to 'pass on' the OASDI increase to those persons concurrently receiving both public assistance and social security benefits.

The new law contains a provision for protective payments to third persons on behalf of recipients of Aid to the Blind, Old Age Assistance, and Aid to the Totally Disabled, when such recipients are unable to manage their money because of physical or mental incapacity.

The 7 percent increase in OASDI benefits (with a minimum of \$4) will become effective January 1, 1965. Thus there will be about eight months' retroactive accumulated increase. The law permits the States to disregard this retroactive lump sum payment in determining grants of public assistance. Finally, the law removes exclusion from Federal matching in Old Age Assistance and Medical Assistance for the Aged as to aged individuals who are patients in institutions for tuberculosis or mental diseases, or who have been diagnosed as having tuberculosis or psychosis, and as a result are patients in a medical institution.

(5) Other Provisions. This exciting new law, consisting of almost 400 pages, contains many other provisions such as: judicial review of actions of the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in

connection with public assistance plans submitted by the States; a detailed schedule of tax increases running through 1987; benefits to certain persons aged 72 or over; coverage under OASDI of self-employed physicians; methods of reporting certain farm income; mandatory reporting of cash tips received by an employee; broader coverage of medical and dental care for children; increases in child welfare services; benefits for remarried widows, etc.

In summary one may say that at the end of the first third of the 20th century the American people took hesitant, mincing steps in the field of human welfare with the passage of the original Social Security Act in 1935. At the beginning of the second third of this century the American people are striding forward with bolder, longer steps through their enactment into law of the 1965 Amendments to the Social Security Act. We all pray that this confident stride will continue and that America's war on poverty will be vigorously waged on that Front Line which consists of the provisions of the Social Security Act.

RESOLUTION 65 - 05: DISABILITY INSURANCE FOR THE BLIND

WHEREAS, Congressman Cecil R. King, California, and Senator Vance Hartke, Indiana, acting together and in cooperation with the National Federation of the Blind, have introduced identical bills (H.R. 6426 and S. 1787), which would amend Title 2 of the Social Security Act to liberalize provisions of the Federal Disability Insurance Program to the benefit and advantage of persons who are blind or who may become blind; and,

WHEREAS, H. R. 6426-S. 1787, would make it impossible for persons who are blind in accordance with the generally accepted definition of blindness, and who have worked for at least six quarters in social-security covered work, to draw disability insurance cash payments so long as the disability of blindness lasts, and irrespective of their earnings; and,

WHEREAS, H. R. 6426-S. 1787 would base entitlement to receive disability payments where it belongs -- upon the existence and the continuing existence of the physical disability of blindness -- and would reduce qualifying quarters of coverage, thus making such benefits more readily available to more persons disabled by blindness; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled in the city of Washington, this 8th day

of July, 1965, that this organization commends and thanks Congressman King and Senator Hartke for their efforts to improve, for blind men and women, the disability insurance program operated under Title 2 of the Social Security Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers and staff of this organization are directed to take all necessary actions to secure adoption of the King-Hartke Disability Insurance for the Blind bill into Federal law.

Adopted unanimously.

RESOLUTION 65 - 06:
DURATION OF RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS IN PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

WHEREAS, Congressman Cecil R. King, California, and Senator Vance Hartke, Indiana, joining in sponsorship of a long-sought legislative goal of the National Federation of the Blind, have introduced identical measures (H.R. 8319 and S. 2169), which would prohibit the imposition length of residence as an eligibility requirement to receive aid to the blind; and

WHEREAS, enactment of these measures into Federal law is essential if employable blind persons, though in need of public help and dependent upon aid to the blind for survival support, are to be permitted, encouraged, and assisted to seek jobs for which they are qualified wherever such jobs can be found throughout the entire nation; and,

WHEREAS, enactment of these bills into Federal law is most necessary if vocational training and rehabilitative services are to culminate in remunerative employment for substantial numbers of blind persons; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled, in the city of Washington, this 8th day of July, 1965, that this organization commends and thanks Congressman King and Senator Hartke for their constant support of our legislative goals in Congress, and this organization is especially grateful to these comrades in our cause for their sponsorship and support of a measure to remove legal restrictions on the free movement of needy blind persons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers and staff of this

organization are directed to take all necessary actions to secure the enactment of these bills into Federal law.

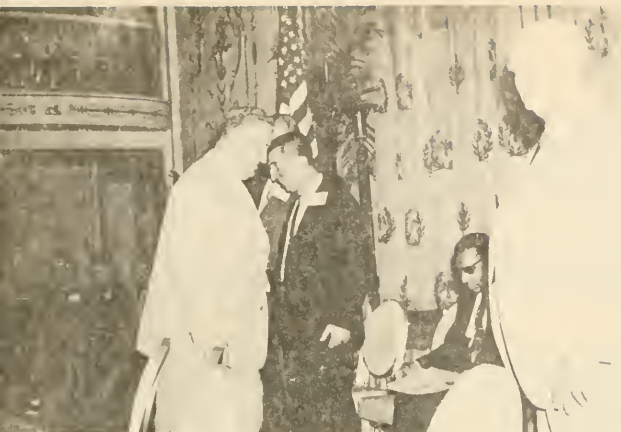
Adopted unanimously.

RESOLUTION 65 - 08:

COMPREHENSIVE REFORM OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

WHEREAS, the latest King-Hartke bills, H.R. 8923 and S. 2170 would do the following:

- (1) Eliminate any time limitation upon the exemption of income and resources of a recipient of aid to the blind having an approved rehabilitation plan for achieving self-support;
- (2) Place a reasonable ceiling on the amount of a relative's financial responsibility to contribute toward the support of a blind family member in need of public help;
- (3) Prohibit lien and length of residence laws;
- (4) Provide that aid payments be presumed to be a fixed minimum amount;
- (5) Permit the retention of the categorical approach in the administration of aid to the blind under a Title XVI combined plan of aid;
- (6) Permit a State which files a Title XVI combined plan of aid to administer aid to the blind separate from such combined plan and will allow such State to receive Federal financial participation;
- (7) Permit States to administer aid to the blind in a State agency other than the State welfare agency;
- (8) Establish separate Federal financial participation in medical assistance to the needy blind;
- (9) Make it possible for a State to abandon a Title XVI combined plan of aid and resume separate programs for the aged, blind and disabled;
- (10) Require that the social services provided for in the Public



REP. WALTER S. BAR-
ING, Nevada Congressman
famed for Kennedy-Baring
Bill, was one of the con-
vention's notable guest
speakers. At right is his
Administrative Assistant,
Tim Seward. (Picture
at left.)

SENATOR FROM
UTAH, Frank Moss,
is shown here with
the NFB's John Nagle
following his speech
to the convention.
(Picture at right.)



THREE CALIFORNIANS:
Congressman Phillip
Burton of California is
flanked by two friends
from the home state,
Russ Kletzing and Jaco-
bus tenBroek. (Picture
at left.)

Welfare amendments of 1962 be given only to aid recipients who request them, and not make the aid grant contingent upon the acceptance of such social services, and that they be administered to aid recipients in accordance with their different and distinctive categorical needs; and,

(11) Provide for increased Federal financial participation in aid payments, and require that any such additional Federal money be passed on to the aided needy; and

WHEREAS, great benefits and improved living conditions and rehabilitative opportunities would result to the nation's 100, 000 blind recipients of aid if these identical King-Hartke bills were adopted by Congress now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled in the city of Washington, this 8th day of July, 1965, that this organization thanks and commends Congressman King and Senator Hartke for their staunch support of the goals and objectives of the National Federation of the Blind and particularly appreciates their continuing and unceasing help, as evidenced by their introduction in the 89th Congress, of H.R. 8923 and S. 2170 ; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers and staff of this organization are ordered to take all necessary action to secure enactment of H.R. 8923 and S. 2170 into Federal law.

Adopted Unanimously.

SENATOR HARTKE PAYS TRIBUTE TO NFB

One of the Federation's most courageous and effective champions in the United States Congress, Senator Vance Hartke of Indiana, related his legislative struggles and paid tribute to the efforts of the NFB in an address prepared for delivery before the Washington convention on July 9.

Recalling the citation presented to him when he received the Federation's Newel Perry Award a few years ago, Senator Hartke said that his "faith in the blind was and remains the faith the blind have in themselves; that with opportunity the blind can be normal, productive, independent and equal citizens."

He declared that "it is that faith that we share in common, the faith that blindness need not be a life-destroying handicap condemning men and women to misery, but that it can be overcome to provide a life

of joy and usefulness and self-sufficiency. Your very presence here today is testimony to the fact that this faith is justified by the reality of your independence and achievements as individuals and as an organization. You are the ones who really put that faith to the test. You are the experts, because you have the experience. All I can do, or persons like me, is to encourage that faith and do what we can to furnish the soil in which it can best flourish."

The well-known Indiana Democrat, who since 1958 has introduced and fought for numerous measures in the Senate aimed at improving conditions for the blind, maintained that past legislative achievements "have hardly more than plowed the ground, only partially prepared the soil. We need to do more in order that the seeds can fully develop under the cultivation only you can give them.

"Part of what we are hoping to do in the Senate today is tilling a little deeper, fertilizing a little heavier, breaking up the clods of old traditions and outmoded attitudes. The instrument we are using is the amendment I am fighting for on the floor of the Senate to change the law of Social Security on blind disability."

Turning to an explanation of his crucial bill to reform the disability insurance program for the blind, Senator Hartke pointed out that the measure "for the first time will give us a statutory definition of blindness as a part of the disability definition: namely, the standard definition used in the Internal Revenue Code....

"But even more important, of course, is the reduction of the number of quarters needed in covered employment under Social Security in order to qualify for disability benefits. Whereas the requirement is 20 quarters, or five years, out of the past ten years, the change would require only six quarters or a year and a half, without limitation as to when they were earned," he said.

"This would put a realistic floor underneath the needs of the blind, giving encouragement and a greater measure of independence. It is a far cry from the treatment of the past, where the only recourse of the blind for self-help -- and not in the far distant past, at that -- was to sell pencils in the street and hold a tin cup for public alms. As Senator Humphrey put it last year, before he was promoted by the electorate to Vice President: 'This amendment seeks to make the disability insurance program a true insurance program against the economic catastrophe of blindness, against the economic disadvantages which result when blindness occurs in the life of a workingman.'

"It would seem to me that for many, the problems of rehabilitation or of becoming equipped to hold a social security-covered job for five years out of a ten-year period might well look like an obstacle . . . But if the blind person needs only a year and a half in all, there is incentive to achieve that year and a half of covered employment -- and once having experienced employment, he will find that his fears are overcome and he can continue as a usefully producing citizen.

In concluding, Senator Hartke said: "I could talk about the other bills which I introduced recently, prohibiting state residence requirements for the blind and amending the social security law on blind rehabilitation. But instead I must turn my attention to the Senate, where I go to carry on the fight you are helping me to wage. With the faith you have in yourselves, and the faith I have in you and all others everywhere like you, I know that we can do the job."

THE CONVENTION'S LIGHTER SIDE

The annual conventions of the National Federation, over the past quarter of a century, have established what a musician might describe as a recurrent tonal pattern -- made up of a dominant theme and a leitmotif. The dominant theme is, of course, the conduct of convention business: the serious enterprise of policy decision and deliberation bearing on the program objectives of the organized blind.

That major theme was very much in evidence throughout the Washington convention, and dramatically reinforced by the tributes paid to the Federation by a host of distinguished political leaders. But all was not solemnity and hard work at the Mayflower Hotel. The customary leitmotif -- the note of gaiety and celebration, of conviviality and sheer enjoyment -- was also there in full measure.

The lighter tone began to be apparent in the atmosphere as early as Saturday, July 3, when the first wave of delegates landed and secured a beachhead at the convention hotel. Russ and Ruth Kletzing had arrived Friday evening, along with Perry Sundquist, and promptly set up permanent open house in the national headquarters suite. Chick and Hazel tenBroek were already on the ground, having been in the capital for a week attending a national conference on "The Law and Poor" convened by the Office of Economic Opportunity. Ken and Anna-Katherine Jernigan

also checked in on Friday, carrying half the population of Iowa with them; the other half arrived by special bus on Saturday morning. (All told there were 57 persons in the Iowa delegation, the biggest of all the state contingents.)

Before the convention was gavelled to order on Tuesday morning, hundreds of delegates and their families had gathered at the Mayflower from all parts of the country and beyond the seas. Their high spirits and good humor -- and most of all their striking lack of dependency -- made a strong impression on those who encountered them in or out of the hotel. "The staff at the Mayflower Hotel," commented the Washington EVENING STAR, "where the Federation members are staying during the meeting, have been impressed with the mobility of these guests. Gilbert Downer, assistant night manager of the hotel, said the Federation rejected an offer to station attendants in the automatic elevators. 'They said they would have no trouble, and I assure you they haven't,' Downer said."

And the WASHINGTON POST added the remark: "If it is easy to mistake a group in the lobby for ordinary convention-goers, they couldn't be happier. If the hotel staff seems frightened at their mobility, the 700 blind at the Mayflower are a bit proud of it."

That figure of 700 Federationists was definitely on the conservative side; but then the newspaper report was published on the day before the convention opened. By Tuesday the ranks of the delegates had swelled to near-record proportions; in addition to Iowa's masses (57), there were 53 persons from Massachusetts and 51 from Virginia. Somewhat farther back were Alabama, California and New York, each with more than 22 in their delegation. Hawaii's one-woman delegation (Eva Smyth) made up for its modest size by collaring a three-times-larger group of congressmen from the island state for the convention banquet.

Unsung Heroes - and Heroines

At the east end of the Mayflower corridor was a string of tables behind which operated the convention's unsung heroes and heroines. Among them were Mabel Nading of Iowa and Ginny Nagle of Washington, D. D., in charge of information; Glenn Sterling and Larry McKeever of Iowa on registration; Don Bell, another Iowan, on banquet tickets; and Ruth Drummond of Virginia on just about everything -- including publicity, press, and public relations.

Handing out braille and print materials; answering questions

about program and events; locating personalities for newspaper interview, and sometimes being interviewed themselves; bringing lost property and owners together -- these are only a sample of the selfless and ceaseless services of the convention's "information girls." Besides such chores, Mabel somehow found the time to collaborate with Glenn in brailleing 535 cards packed with data about the congressional guests for the use of banquet M. C. Ken Jernigan.

The boys from Iowa, Larry and Glenn, handled the assignments of convention registration and a thousand other details and emergencies with diligence, devotion and dispatch. And their colleague Don Bell, in charge of banquet ticket sales, did so well that he wound up selling more tickets than ever before for an NFB banquet. One more name should be added to the roster of the Inexhaustibles: that of George Drummond, affable Virginia gentleman and husband of the tireless Ruth. George, in addition to rounding up DeMolay boys and others to serve as guides, became a one-man Scout troop for the duration of the convention; from early morning until late into each night, he could be heard everywhere saying, "Where do you want to go?" and "What can I do to help you?"

Then there was Mildred Hamby, of Michigan, who manned the telephone in the presidential suite -- answering countless queries, locating people, making appointments for Russ Kletzing. Her round-the-clock vigil gave rise to the great unsolved mystery of the convention: when did Mildred find time to sleep?

The work of the information specialists covered a wide terrain. There was the time when Vernon Butler, president of the host D. C. affiliate, learned that Señor Byron Eguiguren -- our eminent guest from Ecuador -- wished to secure a folding cane, a braille slate and a stylus to take home with him from the convention. Verne brought his problem to the information table; a messenger was promptly dispatched to the local agency for the blind, and soon returned with the items. Then Verne called Señor Eguiguren to notify him that the articles were available. After several long moments on the phone, Verne turned to Ginny Nagle in utter frustration. "I can't communicate with him," he said. Verne speaks no Spanish -- and Señor Eguiguren speaks little English.

Undaunted by this breakdown in international communication, Ginny got on the phone to locate a Spanish-speaking delegate. Many calls were made, and the Ecuadorian's departure drew very near -- but at the last moment Pauline Gomez of New Mexico was found, communications were restored, and the Federationist from Washington made the acquaintance of the International Federationist from south of the border. . . . "Unsung" those backstage heroes and heroines of

the convention may have been: but they were never unstrung!

The Humphrey Wit

"You know, Russell, when you took me down the line, and introduced me to all those people on the platform, I began to think maybe you're running for some other office. Anyone who can continue to introduce you one time after another -- and seldom if ever make a mistake -- I said to myself, this fellow's a threat!"

Thus spake Hubert H. Humphrey, Vice President of the United States, in the informal opening remarks of his address to the convention on July 7. The Minnesota statesman went on to speak of two other well-known Federationists who were beside him on the platform:

"Permit me to say a word about this distinguished -- and distinguished-looking, too, I may add -- this honorable citizen and great leader of the National Federation of the Blind and of many organizations dedicated to human betterment: I refer to your own Doctor tenBroek. Delegate to world conferences, founder of this great organization, president emeritus -- twenty-one years, I believe, Doctor, is that right? -- why, I'll settle for eight years as Vice President!"

"But it's great to be here and to feel the sense of inspiration you give to all of us. I also want you to know that you have a very outstanding and highly respected representative in Washington -- and I refer to a man I've grown to know as a member of Congress through the years: John Nagle. You want to get something, you just turn that fellow loose. It's easier to give in than it is to resist!"

Convention Crisis

When Ken Jernigan reported on the coming convention tour at a meeting of the NFB's Executive Committee, he remarked that arrangements had been made to allow our convention tourists to ride on buses near the grave of President Kennedy, then to alight and walk by the site of the grave. Several persons thereupon rose to say this wasn't their understanding -- that the Gray Line people conducting the tour was saying that our conventioners would have to stay aboard the buses, stationed far above the grave, and would instead be given a lecture -- because it was thought the weather would be too hot for blind tourists to attempt a walk by the grave.

Of course, the Gray Line manager was immediately called -- at his home, on a holiday. He was summoned to the hotel to clear up the

misunderstanding. The upshot of that encounter is known to all who took the tour: the blind tourists did walk by the Kennedy grave, just as others do; they did feel the picket fence, and they felt too the atmosphere of quiet reverence which surrounds this newest national shrine.

A Loaf of Bread, a Yard of Beer, and Thou

One of the less vital statistics of a very vital convention is the fact that, in two of the Mayflower's three fine restaurants, beer could be purchased by the yard or the half-yard. (hard liquor could also be bought by the pound; but not many had the stomach, stamina or steersmanship for that.) Those were the actual measurements of the sky-high flagons into which the golden brew was poured -- and out of which it ultimately poured, or rather cascaded, into the mouth and out of the mouth and down the shirtfront of the unwary customer who undertook the experiment for the first time. (This is an authenticated first-hand report.)

The hotel's three restaurants -- the Presidential Room, the Rib Room, and the Town and Country -- were all as easy on the palate as they were hard on the pocketbook. And there were other good restaurants just a wallet's throw away: Harvey's, one door down the street, justly famous for seafood; Scholl's Colonial Cafeteria, a block away, almost as famous for its combination of economy with quality; and numbers of more exotic places (including a Trader Vic's) within spending distance. After a couple of these culinary caravansaries, someone was heard to remark that the "D. C. " after Washington must stand for "Diner's Club. "

A RESOLUTION ON LIBRARIES

WHEREAS, Congressman Robert J. Corbett, Pennsylvania, continuing his fine and full cooperation with the National Federation of the Blind, has introduced in the House of Representatives a bill, H.R. 9549, which would provide Federal funds to regional libraries for the blind to help meet the costs of distributing braille and recorded books to blind persons; and

WHEREAS, enactment of H.R. 9549 into law will make it possible for regional libraries for the blind to hire more fully qualified personnel and to make other expenditures with resultant improved library services to blind people; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled in the city of Washington, this 8th day of July, 1965, that this organization thanks and commends Congressman Corbett for his cooperative efforts with the National Federation of the Blind to bring about more satisfactory braille and recorded book services to blind people; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers and staff of this organization are ordered and directed to take all actions necessary to secure the enactment of H.R. 9549 into Federal law.

CHANGES IN POSTAL LAWS: A RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Congressman Robert J. Corbett, responding to the request of the National Federation of the Blind, as well as that of the American Association of Workers for the Blind, the American Printing House for the Blind, has introduced in the House of Representatives a bill, H.R. 9550, to make changes in the federal postal laws for the benefit of blind persons and for the benefit of agencies and organizations providing services to blind persons; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 9550 would allow the free mailing of heavier and larger braille and recorded book packages to and by blind persons; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 9550 would also allow the free mailing of magazines for which a subscription is charged if the amount charged is not

more than the production cost of the magazine, it would expand the free mailing privilege to include educational devices and materials and special devices specifically intended for the benefit and use of the blind, and it would allow correspondence to or from blind persons, whether in braille, sight-saving-size type, or sound recordings, to be mailed without postal charge; and

WHEREAS, enactment of H. R. 9550 into federal law would result in improved library services to blind persons, would make possible the reduction of subscriptions charged for certain braille and recorded periodicals, it would enhance the educational opportunities of blind children and adults, and would serve to stimulate and encourage them toward more frequent letter communication among themselves and with their sighted family and friends; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled in the city of Washington, this 8th day of July, 1965, that this organization thanks and commends Congressman Corbett for his sponsorship and support of the postal rates amending bill for the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers and staff of this organization are directed to take all necessary steps to secure the adoption of H. R. 9550 by the 89th Congress.

A STAND ON VENDING STANDS

WHEREAS, the vending stand program for the blind under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, as amended, has provided remunerative and satisfying employment for thousands of blind persons; and

WHEREAS blind vending stand operators have demonstrated their ability to operate vending stands, snack bars, cafeterias, and other food service establishments in compliance with modern merchandising and sanitation standards; and

WHEREAS the General Services Administration in its 1963 and 1964 policy revisions has stipulated that blind persons may not market soft drinks, milk, fruit juices, pies, cakes, and sandwiches except when placed in individual containers prior to receipt by the blind operators; and

WHEREAS the policies of General Services Administration further

stipulate that, if coffee and hot chocolate are merchandised other than through a vending machine, blind operators "shall not prepare or serve it, nor handle the utensils used in connection therewith"; and

WHEREAS the policies of General Services Administration are retarding further development of the vending stand program for the blind by favoring coin operated vending machines over blind operators by excluding the use of modern premix and postmix soft drink dispensing equipment and by prohibiting blind persons from preparing and serving coffee or handling the utensils utilized in dispensing coffee and hot chocolate; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled in the City of Washington this 8th day of July, 1965 that the Commissioner, Public Buildings Service, General Services Administration, be requested and urged to review and liberalize the policies of General Services Administration to permit and encourage the establishment and operation of blind operated vending stands which serve coffee, hot chocolate, soft drinks, milk, fruit juices, sandwiches, cakes, pies, and other food prepared on the premises wherever practicable; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers and staff of this organization are directed to work with General Services Administration, the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, and other interested organizations in the development of enlightened rules and policies governing the vending stand program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers and staff of this Federation are directed to prepare and support appropriate legislation to require effective implementation of the intent and purpose of the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

Adopted Unanimously.

SENATOR ROBERT KENNEDY ADDRESSES FEDERATION

"As President Kennedy once said, the blind have a right to organize. He made that effort; he felt that you and those that you represent have the right to live out your lives in dignity and honor: that those who are handicapped, those who are blind, could make great contributions to the United States, could make contributions to our government, and to industry, and to labor -- and that that right should be recognized. And



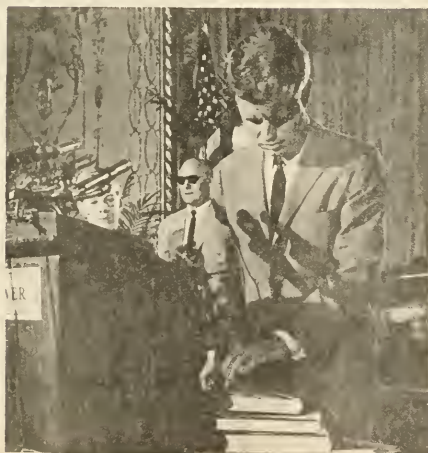
SENATOR ROBERT KENNEDY

speaks to a cheering convention following President Kletzing's presentation of a memorial award to the John F. Kennedy Library. (Picture at left.)

A WARM RECEPTION.

Scores of Federation delegates swarmed around the platform to greet and shake hands with Senator Kennedy during his convention appearance.

(Picture at right.)



RIGHT TO ORGANIZE:

Senator Kennedy studies the three memorial volumes of NFB testimony and correspondence with President Kennedy on the famous right-to-organize fight in Congress. (Picture at left.)

he knew that, like any other group, it could be recognized best if those who were so handicapped were able to get together, to fight as a group and as an organization for their future, and for the future of their children. And that is what you have done -- and that's why I am happy to be associated with all of you."

The speaker: Senator Robert F. Kennedy. The date: July 9, 1965. The occasion: The 25th annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind.

"At 9:14 yesterday morning," wrote Staff Writer Michael Lerner in the WASHINGTON POST the following day, "Senator Robert Kennedy stepped out of the sunlight into the ballroom of the Mayflower Hotel to speak to an audience of the blind.

"We need more vending stand locations," the speaker was saying as Senator Kennedy entered. There was applause. But, as the crowd sensed that the Senator had arrived, the applause grew. The crowd stood, still applauding. Kennedy moved behind the green felt covered table and sat down near the speakers' stand.

"About a dozen persons who had rushed forward with their guide dogs or canes stood applauding in the center aisle, directly before the podium. Russell Kletzing, president of the National Federation of the Blind, began introducing Kennedy before the applause subsided."

The POST's report on the dramatic last-morning episode, which climaxed the Federation's four-day convention, was long on color but short on detail. The introductory speech by the NFB's president centered upon the presentation to the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library of three handsomely bound volumes containing correspondence between the late President and officers of the Federation, together with the Federation's testimony during 1959 hearings on the Kennedy-Baring right-to-organize bill before the Elliott Committee of the House of Representatives. In addition to the gift books, Kletzing presented a special memorial award, in the form of a bronze-and-walnut plaque, honoring the late President's contributions to the cause of the organized blind.

"Kletzing spoke of President Kennedy's humanitarianism," the WASHINGTON POST story continued, "while the President's brother looked around the ballroom. Kennedy's tan set him off from everyone else at the table. His clothes were immaculate: a herring-bone suit that looked blue-green at a distance, a blue shirt with a carefully knotted blue and red tie, and round gold cuff links that shone softly in the television spotlights when he crossed his arms."

When he had received the plaque and books from the Federation's president, Senator Kennedy stood silently for what seemed long moments, opening one volume after another and swiftly scanning the contents while the warm applause from the audience of around 1,000 persons rose and then slowly died away. When he spoke it was obviously without the aid of notes or text; he spoke deliberately, softly, but with the familiar Kennedy inflection -- and the unmistakable Kennedy grace.

"I want to just tell you," the Senator began, "how appreciative and how grateful I am to you for this presentation to the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library. As I look over these books with your names in them -- the documents on the right of the blind to organize, and then the correspondence that President Kennedy had with some of your officers -- it brings back to my mind once again the strong feeling of affection and admiration that President Kennedy had for you and for your efforts -- both after he became President, and prior to that time when he was a senator from the state of Massachusetts. . .

"A Greek philosopher once wrote: 'What joy is there in day that follows day, some swift, some slow, with death the only goal?' What we are interested in -- those of you that are here, and those of us who are in the Senate of the United States, who feel strongly about this problem -- is to make sure that you can live out your lives making a contribution to society, and live your lives in dignity.

"I think back to the time when I was Attorney-General," he went on. "Two of the best lawyers in the Civil Rights Division, two of the lawyers who did almost more than anyone else to bring rights to all of our citizens, were persons who were blind. It might come as a surprise to many people in the United States that the man in charge of surveying and studying the records within the Civil Rights Division -- records that have to be so carefully appraised -- that all this was done under the direction and control of a man who is blind.

"So I know from personal experience what kind of a contribution those who are blind can make -- what a difference they can make in a department of the government, what a difference they can make in an agency, what a difference they can really make in industry and labor.

"So I join with you," the Senator concluded, "first in thanking you for your recognition of President Kennedy's interest in you and your organization. And I also say that that interest is not ended: that this is a recognition of the past because of what we intend to accomplish in the future.

"And in that effort, in what you are trying to do -- both as

individuals and as officers of this organization -- I want to pledge to you the help and assistance of the junior senator from the state of New York. Thank you very much. "

During Senator Kennedy's talk, the WASHINGTON POST reported, "People slid forward in their seats. Many women gripped the telescoping white canes that fold into neat bundles. A man held a clipboard against his knee and with one hand pricked patterns in the paper with a flat rectangular braille machine.

"It was not the presence of Kennedy that gripped these people, but his voice," the newspaper account continued. "Even when he used cliches, a halting, fresh earnestness in his tone broke through. Then Kennedy concluded his talk by saying that the struggle for equal opportunity for the blind had not ended with his brother's death.

"After an instant of silence there was a standing ovation. Hundreds of people rushed forward. Some swished their canes to avoid chairs; others held guide dogs close to their sides or kept a light hand on the elbow of the person in front.

"Kennedy leaned across the table and reached out with both arms into the forest of hands. He grasped two hands at a time. 'How do you do, nice to see you,' he said repeatedly. A rough line formed along the table. Kennedy autographed name cards, taking less than three seconds for each autograph. 'You've made my trip to Washington wonderful, I'll be happy the rest of my life,' one woman said. 'Thank you very much,' Kennedy said.

"He shook hands with a woman and grasped the paw of the dog she held up before him. 'Nice to meet you, Bambi,' he said to the dog. Then he moved slowly out into the hall through the crowd. Once in the open, he strode down the wide corridor of the Mayflower Hotel, an aide beside him carrying the records and the plaque, a crowd of people with canes and dogs strung out behind.

"Kennedy walked out into the shade and sunlight of De Sales Street at 9:48. He got into a red convertible with three aides. In the back there were a baby carriage, a yellow sand pail, a toy sports car, and a golf ball. "

Thus ended the newspaper's report of one of the convention's climactic events. But the actual story was not over. Back in the main ballroom, it was several minutes before the delegates were back again in their seats and the buzz of excited conversation had subsided enough for President Kletzing to call the convention to order.

Those who were there during the memorable ceremony were to remember in the days and weeks ahead not only the graceful remarks of the late President's brother but also the presentation address by their own chief officer. In his own speech Russ Kletzing captured in a relatively few well-chosen words the historic contributions of President Kennedy to the cause of the organized blind and of other disadvantaged Americans.

"In the long struggle of the National Federation for the dignity of the blind as human beings," Kletzing began, "none of our champions has been more gallant in his sharing of our cause than President John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

"First of all, there was his simple and conspicuous quality of humanitarianism -- an attitude of care, commitment and concern for the well-being of all Americans hobbled or handicapped in the pursuit of happiness. That complete commitment reached out to embrace the legions of unfortunate and underprivileged Americans condemned by the accidents of fortune to second-rate lives in second-class compartments."

But, the Federation's president continued, "There was more, much more, than mere sympathy. His practical idealism comprised an unswerving faith in the moral potential of the American people. His was an outlook which left far behind the shallow and complacent appeals of traditional charity -- addressed mainly to the pocketbook -- and ventured to tap the deeper-lying human resources of private conscience and social obligation.

"His humanitarianism, his idealism, could not rest content with the keeping together of minds and bodies. Rather, he sought the repair and restoration of the disabled and disadvantaged. He sought to make men whole in mind, in body, and in opportunity.

"He was a humanitarian whose profound concern for all the unfortunate, including the blind, was translated into enlightened programs which are restoring these people to full participation in their society.

"His place, however, in the hearts of blind Americans was insured forever even before he became our President. For it was Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts who came to our defense in our most embattled hour and took up our struggle for the right to organize. It was the purpose of the Kennedy Bill to restore to the blind the right to self-organization and self-expression, free from coercion and intimidation by those agencies, public and private, which are in a position to exercise such absolute control over our lives and livelihoods. The moral impact of

that measure has once and for all established blind Americans as first-class citizens, free to join, free to petition, free to speak and act confident and unafraid.

"For the blind who are part of America -- and therefore for all Americans -- this is a chapter in our history which must not go unheeded and unpreserved.

"So that this aspect of a great President's career may be recorded for posterity," Kletzing concluded, "we of the National Federation of the Blind present to the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library these volumes of recorded history and testimony and this memorial award symbolizing our esteem and gratitude to one of the greatest of all Americans."

Then he turned away from the array of microphones which festooned the speaker's rostrum, toward the distinguished Democratic political figure at his left, and spoke a few more words of greeting and of gratitude as he handed over the tangible tribute of the rightfully organized blind people of America.

THE CHAVICH CASE -- OUTLOOK FOR BLIND TEACHERS

A critical blow to the hopes of blind teachers in New York City was struck on July 12 by the Court of Appeals of New York -- the state's highest court -- in a 4-to-3 decision in the Chavich case affirming the earlier judgment of the Appellate Division of the state's Supreme Court. The effect of the new decision is to close the door to any further judicial review of Alexander Chavich's effort to gain accreditation as a teacher in the city schools.

The earlier judgment against Chavich was handed down April 12 by the court's Appellate Division following appeal by the New York City Board of Education of a decision in favor of the blind teacher by a lower court.

The Chavich case began in 1963 when the city board of education turned down his application on the ground that he could not perform the tasks of a teacher by virtue of "defective vision." Chavich was upheld in 1964 by Judge Frank J. Pino of the New York Supreme Court, Kings County, on the basis of a state law barring discrimination against teachers on grounds of blindness. The state statute had been passed in 1960 after intensive campaigning by the National Federation's New York affiliate, the Empire State Association of the Blind.

Since the passage of the 1960 anti-discrimination law, no less than eleven blind teachers have found employment in New York state elementary and high schools outside New York City, according to information furnished THE BRAILLE MONITOR by Oscar Friedensohn, director of New York's State Commission for the Blind. Only one blind person teaching in the public schools was hired before the enactment of the legislation.

In addition "there are 53 blind students currently attending college through our Vocational Rehabilitation Services whose objectives are teaching," Friedensohn said. "We are also aware of blind persons teaching in Long Island University, Hamilton College, City College of New York, Hunter College, State University of New York at Fredonia, and the Morrisville Technical and Agricultural Institute. I don't believe we are aware of all blind persons teaching at a college level in New York State."

With further legal recourse now at an end, the next step for the New York blind will be to persuade the state legislature to write a specific provision into the anti-discrimination statute making it applicable to the New York city schools. (The decision against Chavich had turned in part on the court's ruling that the state law was not applicable to New York City, and therefore that the city's own ordinance disqualifying blind teachers must stand.) At the same time efforts should be pressed to get the city's fathers to throw out the local ordinance in favor of one consistent with the state law.

Two States Make Progress

While the outlook for blind teachers in New York City was darkened by the negative court action against Chavich, two other states were chalking up substantial legislative victories in the same field. The Massachusetts legislature on March 9 approved a bill barring discrimination against blind applicants for college teaching positions in the state. The specific wording of the legislation reads: "The appointing authority of the University of Massachusetts or of any college or other institution of higher learning of the commonwealth shall not refuse to elect and contract with a candidate for a teaching position in said university or in any such college or institution because of the blindness of such candidate."

More recently, California's Governor Pat Brown signed into law a bill eliminating discrimination against the blind in teacher training, practice teaching, and the hiring of teachers. The bill was strongly buttressed by a state Senate fact-finding committee's survey of the attitudes

of school principals toward blind instructors. All of the blind teachers were rated as average or better, and more than 90 percent were rated either good, excellent or superior by the 45 principals who responded to the questionnaire.

The California legislative action took place against a background of big-city discrimination led by the Los Angeles City board of education, which went so far as to reject the findings of its own statewide survey on the performance of blind teachers. Although that study clearly established that the state's 41 blind public school teachers were performing more than satisfactorily, the L.A. officials reaffirmed their discriminatory policy against blind instructors. (For details see THE BRAILLE MONITOR, May 1965, pages 27-29.)

In an earlier precedent, the Pennsylvania legislature took somewhat similar action in 1959 to promote opportunities for blind teachers, by amending a teacher-certification statute to provide for clearance of the blind applicant either by his college or by his rehabilitation agency.

CONGRESS TO ACT ON MINIMUM WAGE

Federation-supported bills to provide minimum wage protection for handicapped workers in privately operated sheltered workshops are now under committee consideration in both the Senate and House of Representatives.

The bills are H. R. 8093, introduced by Congressman John Dent of Pennsylvania, under consideration by the House General Subcommittee on Labor of the Committee on Education and Labor; and S. 2210, introduced by Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon, now in the hands of the Senate Subcommittee on Labor of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Both committees are deliberating on amendments to the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Members and friends of the National Federation have been urged by President Russell Kletzing in a special bulletin to send letters and telegrams in support of the legislation to the members of the two congressional committees (as listed at the end of this article).

Stressing the urgency of immediate action by Federationists, Kletzing pointed out that "Although our bills have the support of the AAWB, they are receiving formidable opposition from sheltered shop interests,

some agencies for the blind, members of the National Rehabilitation Association and the National Association for Sheltered Workshops and Homebound Industries."

Briefly, the Dent-Morse bill would increase wages to sheltered workers to 50 percent of the prevailing minimum (now \$1.25 an hour) effective January 1, 1966; to 75 percent one year later, and to the prevailing minimum wage as of January 1, 1968. It would also authorize payment of less than the prescribed minimums to handicapped workers receiving training or evaluation services in a sheltered shop where work is incidental to the services, and to individuals so severely disabled they are unable to engage in regular competitive employment outside the shop.

The Federation's Washington office chief, John Nagle, has twice testified this summer at congressional hearings on the minimum-wage-bill -- on June 1 before the House subcommittee, and on July 19 before the Senate group. "We are pleading for the enactment of legislation which would give disabled workers the same protection of federal law now available to millions of other workers," Nagle said: "the same protection you are considering extending to millions of new workers presently unprotected by federal law."

A strong argument for the wage measure was voiced by Senator Morse on June 28 in a speech accompanying his introduction of S. 2210. "I think the time has come to recognize that the principle of minimum wage laws applied just as much to the handicapped person who is gainfully employed as it does to anyone else," he said. "That principle is that there is a minimum standard of decent living that should be covered in wages paid, and that this standard should be met irrespective of considerations of productivity."

The Oregon senator pointed out that, "In some ways, the minimum living standards for the handicapped are higher than for others, because with special needs for care or for devices to aid them in getting around, the handicapped have higher living expenses."

"Yet we find that in a shop where these people are gainfully employed, the handicapped person may be receiving as little as 30 cents an hour in wages, while the non-handicapped secretary who handles the clerical business and the truckdriver who picks up and distributes the goods are receiving prevailing wages."

Senator Morse struck at those who pretend to be sympathetic to sheltered workers while denying them a minimum wage. "Of course, it

will be said that jobs will be eliminated for this group of people. That is what is always said when it is proposed to extend minimum-wage coverage to a group of workers.

"But when one sees that 167 of the certificates issued by the Secretary of Labor for sheltered workshop exemption permitted wages of less than 25 cents an hour, and eight permitted wages of only five cents an hour, one cannot be sure that employment at that level of earned income is worth saving.

"Who among us could survive on an hourly wage of 25 cents an hour? With the added expenses incurred by those with physical impairment, I wonder if we do not in fact encourage these people to live on public charity rather than work eight hours a day for two dollars or less."

In his testimony at public hearings of the Senate and House committees, John Nagle emphasized that handicapped workers are essentially at the mercy of shop managers under the exemption certificate system. "Decisions on wages and working conditions in the shops are made wholly and unilaterally by the shop management," he said.

"The workers' rights and wages are essentially what the shop management decides they should be. And on minimum wages this unchecked discretion of management is often used to scale down wages well below the minimums required by law for other workers."

Nagle pointed to the steady increase in the numbers of certificates issued to sheltered workshops, permitting payment of substandard wages as low as a nickel an hour. "Moreover, in the fiscal year 1963, 82 investigations were conducted, and 31 workshops were found to be paying some of their workers less than the authorized subminimum rates," he charged.

Letters and telegrams supporting H.R. 8093, the Dent bill, should be sent to the members of the General Subcommittee on Labor, House Office Building, Washington, D.C. The members are: James Roosevelt, California (Chairman); John Dent, Pennsylvania; Roman Pucinski, Illinois; Dominick Daniels, New Jersey; Augustus Hawkins, California; Mrs. Edith Green, Oregon; Alphonzo Bell, California; Charles Goodell, New York; and David Martin, Nebraska.

Letters and telegrams supporting S. 2210, the Morse bill, should be sent to the members of the Subcommittee on Labor, Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. Members are: Pat McNamara, Michigan

(Chairman); Wayne Morse, Oregon; Jennings Randolph, West Virginia; Claiborne Pell, Rhode Island; Gaylord Nelson, Wisconsin; Robert Kennedy, New York; Jacob Javits, New York; Winston Prouty, Vermont; and Paul Fannin, Arizona.

RESOLUTION 65-02 - MINIMUM WAGES IN SHELTERED SHOPS

WHEREAS, Congressman John Dent, Pennsylvania, continuing his cooperation with the National Federation of the Blind to secure decent wages for handicapped men and women employed in the nation's privately-operated sheltered workshops, has introduced a bill (H. R. 8093) in the House of Representatives which would include such workers within the protection of the minimum wage provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act; and,

WHEREAS, H. R. 8093 would increase the wages paid handicapped workers in sheltered workshops to 50 percent of the prevailing minimum wage, effective January 1, 1966, 75 percent January 1, 1967, and a prevailing minimum wage, effective January 1, 1968, it would prohibit reduction of the wages of handicapped workers receiving pay in excess of the prescribed minimums, and it would authorize payment of less than the prescribed minimums to handicapped workers being given training or evaluation services in a sheltered workshop where work is incidental to the services, and to individuals so severely disabled they are unable to engage in regular competitive employment outside the workshop; and

WHEREAS, H. R. 8093 would establish an absolute floor of 50 percent of the prevailing minimum wage for all handicapped workers employed in sheltered workshops, including those engaged in training and evaluation programs, and would establish a new category of facility in the law to be known as "work activity centers" for handicapped individuals whose productive capacity is inconsequential, and would authorize the Secretary of Labor to determine, by study, rates of equitable compensation for persons in work activity centers, and finally, H. R. 8093 would provide for annual certifications by vocational rehabilitation agencies of persons to be paid less than the minimum wage, and of those assigned to work activity centers; and

WHEREAS, the House General Subcommittee on Labor of the Committee on Education and Labor has conducted public hearings on H. R. 8093; Now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled, in the city of Washington this 8th day of July, 1965, that this organization thanks and commends Congressman John Dent for his long-time efforts in association with the organized blind, to obtain a protection of Federal law for the wages of handicapped workers employed in sheltered workshops; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers and staff of this organization are directed to carry forward the policy of this Federation to improve the lot of workers in the sheltered shop and to take all steps necessary to secure the enactment of H.R. 8093 into Federal law.

Adopted Unanimously.

SENATOR FRANK MOSS ADDRESSES CONVENTION

The National Federation of the Blind "has been responsible, perhaps more than any other group, for advancing the idea that the blind should not be separated and segregated from the rest of society," according to Senator Frank Moss of Utah.

The dynamic westerner, one of the major guest speakers at the Federation's Washington convention, told an audience of 800 blind persons on July 8 that "because your members are blind, your organization has a message of great value for us.

"You are the people who know those programs and policies which can best assure you of the opportunity to realize your capabilities to the full: in order to follow the pursuits you would choose, even though these may require special tools or unique methods; to be judged on the merit of your work and your contribution, and not pre-judged on what a particular person arbitrarily decides you cannot do because of your blindness."

Senator Moss was interrupted repeatedly by applause as he declared that "your organization, the National Federation of the Blind, can take credit for much of the progress we have seen in erasing the misconception that blindness means helplessness. We no longer think of blindness as a crippling handicap. We now realize that blindness does not mean that a person must learn craft work or music in order to earn a living," he said.

Speaking vigorously and with evident sincerity, the Utah senator urged his listeners to keep pressing their views and their cause before

the national legislature. "We in Congress are particularly appreciative of your ideas and testimony on pending legislation. It may seem to you that the legislative process is slow at times; but I hope you will not decrease your efforts in behalf of all the blind persons in the United States.

"I hope you will continue to make yourselves heard, not only in committees of Congress, but to other blind citizens who have not yet been able to make the progress you have. Yours is a message of optimism and hope which can lead many out of their despair toward self-confidence, self-help, and ultimately self-support. All of this adds up to self-respect."

Senator Moss gave particular emphasis to the need to recognize blind people as distinctive persons with widely differing talents and interests. "You should be treated as individuals, and receive the same opportunities as all citizens. You should be encouraged to choose any profession within the limitation of your disability.

"On the other hand I do not believe that we should try to over-compensate by thinking that all of you who are blind are therefore superior, because you have overcome the disabling characteristics of your condition. Mr. John Nagle, the head of your Washington office, expressed this well in his paper of several years ago entitled 'The Meaning of Disability to the Individual.' He makes the point that he is simply a human being, with faults and assets, strengths and weaknesses. The first step toward equal opportunity will have been achieved when all blind persons are viewed as individuals, with differing needs and talents.

"The federal government has undertaken many programs as part of its responsibility to help the blind," Senator Moss said. "The Vocational Rehabilitation Act has enabled state programs to train many persons for productive and useful jobs. Aid to the Blind under the Social Security Act provides a certain amount of financial help, though this certainly could be increased. There are expanding programs to provide books printed in braille, funds for reading services for blind students, talking books, and braille music for blind persons throughout the country. The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped has opened up new vocational areas to many who are disabled.

"The government has an impressive record in this area, but there are still inconsistencies and inequities which need correction. The Vocational Rehabilitation Amendments of 1965 are designed to correct some of the inadequacies of the 1954 act. These have recently passed the House of Representatives and hopefully will be passed by the Senate in this session of Congress."

He pointed to several sections of the rehabilitation proposal of immediate interest to the blind: "A longer period of evaluation, six months in the case of the blind and others physically disabled, will be allowed in order for counsellors to determine whether vocational rehabilitation will be successful. At the present time such a judgment must be made with only a minimum of study, probably eliminating from the rehabilitation program many persons who could be helped.

"In the Senate last month a bill was introduced which would eliminate residence as a requirement in eligibility for state programs of aid to the blind supported by federal funds. This bill would remove one more obstacle to the efforts of those with this disability to become self-supporting. Blind persons should be encouraged to look around the country to find an opportunity to establish themselves.

"Blindness should not automatically consign a man or woman to staying in one place. Current restrictions make people hesitant to leave one state in search of employment in another. They may lose their eligibility in the state they leave, and be unable to meet the requirements in the state they wish to go to. I believe such restrictions are harmful and unnecessary, and I hope we can succeed in eliminating them."

Senator Moss expressed strong support for pending proposals, such as those of the King-Hartke bill, to liberalize requirements of public assistance programs for the blind. Referring to the issue of exempt earnings, he declared: "Everyone, disabled or not, should be encouraged to take an active role in his own support. If a blind person fears he may lose the small amount of steady income he now receives he may decide it is not worth the risk to take a job. And that job, however small, might be the first step toward self-sufficiency."

"I hope your convention will yield fruitful results," the senator concluded. "I hope your Federation will continue to prosper and increase in membership. Your philosophy and program provide an inspiring goal to all blind citizens of the United States -- and, may I add, to all citizens of the United States."

REHAB MEANS TEST UP TO STATES

The elimination of economic need as a condition of eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services -- authorized under the pending Vocational Rehabilitation Amendments of 1965 -- will be a matter for the states to decide, according to a measure which has passed the House of Representatives and now awaits action by the Senate. The effect of the bill, H. R. 8310, has been described in a report of the House Committee on Education and Labor.

"The committee wishes to emphasize its feeling that rehabilitation services should be made available on the basis of the person's handicap and not on the basis of economic need," the report states. "With this in mind, the reported bill proposes a deletion of the economic need requirement in the Federal law with the result that the States may, if they wish, offer rehabilitation services without regard to economic need.

"In permitting greater flexibility in the selection of persons for rehabilitation service programs in the States, it is the committee's hope that appropriate, yet reasonable, revision will occur in State procedures. The Vocational Rehabilitation Administration is hereby requested to report back to the committee, one year after enactment of this amendment, on what effect this amendment has had in terms of the number of persons rehabilitated and in terms of the response in the States to this revision in the Federal law."

With the burden of decision on eliminating the need test thus left to the individual states, it becomes important for Federationists in all states to press for appropriate action both legislatively and administratively -- and to do so immediately in view of the one-year deadline on reporting set by the committee.

H. R. 8310, which contains the provision eliminating the need test, is generally expected to pass both houses of Congress in the present session. Another pertinent feature of the bill follows, in the language of the House report:

"Additional amendments will enable State vocational rehabilitation agencies to use Federal funds under section 2 to pay part of the costs of furnishing reader services for blind clients and interpreter services for deaf clients and also to pay part of the costs of management and supervisory services for vending stands and small business enterprises."

The provision erasing economic need as an eligibility requirement is the result of a long-term campaign by the National Federation of the

Blind, which has fought almost alone for across-the-board elimination of the need test in all phases of the rehab program. The Federation's drive received impetus in the present Congress with the introduction of its bill, H. R. 7373, by Congressman Carlton Sickles of Maryland, who was successful as a member of the education subcommittee in getting his proposal incorporated within the overall rehabilitation bill.

In April testimony before the House subcommittee, the Federation pressed for total removal of the economic need requirement rather than its partial elimination in limited phases of the rehabilitation program.

RESOLUTION 65-09 - MEANS TEST IN REHAB

WHEREAS, Congressman Carlton Sickles, Maryland, has introduced a bill (H. R. 7373), in the House of Representatives to eliminate "economic need" as a Federal requirement in determining the eligibility of disabled individuals to receive certain vocational rehabilitation services; and

WHEREAS, both the Special Subcommittee on Education and the Full Committee on Education and Labor have approved a measure (H. R. 8310) making many and substantial changes in the Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Act, including the elimination of "economic need" as a Federal requirement in considering the eligibility of a disabled person to receive any vocational rehabilitation service; now,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled, in the city of Washington, this 8th day of July, 1965, that this organization thanks and commends Congressman Sickles for his cooperation with our efforts to remove the "means" test from the Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Law and from the lives of disabled men and women; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers and staff of this organization are directed to take all steps necessary to see that H. R. 8310 is enacted into Federal law.

Adopted Unanimously.

THE PROGRESS OF FEDERATIONISM ABROAD

The growth and expansion of federationism -- of the spirit of personal independence and fraternal interdependence -- among the blind peoples of the world was a major theme of convention activity at the 25th annual gathering of the National Federation of the Blind in Washington, D. C.

That theme was highlighted in a panel discussion on "The Progress of the Blind Toward Independence -- A World View," featuring three distinguished overseas guests of the Federation: Dr. Horst Geissler, Vice President of West Germany's organization of the blind, the Deutscher Blindenverband; Abdullah El Ghanem, Director of Special Education for the Handicapped in Saudi Arabia; and Byron Eguiguren, Honorary President of the Ecuadorian Federation of the Blind. The panel was moderated by Dr. Jacob Frøid, Executive Director of the Jewish Braille Institute of America and a member of the NFB's Board of Directors.

The theme of international brotherhood was carried forward in a convention address by another eminent guest from abroad: Thomas J. Parker, of the National League of the Blind of Great Britain and Ireland. Also participating in floor discussions were two of the Federation's own internationalists: Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, president of the International Federation of the Blind, and Dr. Isabelle L.D. Grant, famed world traveler in the cause of the organized blind.

Among the many telegrams and letters received from abroad by NFB President Russell Kletzing was the following from King Faisal of Saudi Arabia: "Received your telegram expressing your good feelings on the occasion of sending our delegation to attend the blind convention. We appreciate your sincere feelings and confirm that it gives us pleasure to participate and help in the cause of the blind, which is a humanitarian cause. Pray God for all success and prosperity. Signed, Faisal."

Warm greetings to the convention also came from two Australian blind leaders, Tim Fuery and Hugh Jeffrey, who had taken part in the inaugural meetings of the International Federation last year in Phoenix and New York City.

Rienzi Alagiyawanna, First Vice President of the International Federation, sent us personal good wishes to the Federation's delegates along with his regrets that he could not leave Ceylon to participate in the Washington convention. The IFB's Second Vice President, Dr. Fatima Shah of Pakistan, dispatched the following message to the gathering:



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATIONISTS: Pictured above are the Federation's distinguished guests from overseas. From left: Mr. Hussein, companion to Mr. el Ghanem; Abdullah Mohammad el Ghanem; Dr. Jacob Freid; Byron Eguiguren; Dr. Jacobus tenBroek; Dr. Horst Geissler; Russell Kletzing, and Thomas Parker.



DR. GRANT AND DR. GEISSLER: Isabelle Grant, the NFB's unofficial ambassador abroad, talks with Germany's Dr. Horst Geissler during a business session of the Washington convention.

"On behalf of all the members of the Pakistan Association of the Blind, I send a message of good will, friendship and unity to all the delegates of the NFB and of international organizations present at the convention. We are very close to each other at this moment through the link of the IFB. Let us join in a silent prayer for the achievement of the noble ideals and goals we have set for ourselves."

Reports from Abroad

In their detailed surveys of social and economic progress by the blind in Ecuador, Saudi Arabia, Germany and Great Britain, the Federation's four visiting speakers presented graphic testimony to the successes achieved by blind people in various parts of the world through their own organizations and through the increasing enlistment of public and governmental support.

"Someone had to take a few risks," said Byron Eguiguren with reference to his own country of Ecuador. "I was the one to take them -- and I was lucky in the outcome." He traced the movement of the organized blind in his own nation to the time 14 years ago when his struggle to found a school for the blind was first crowned with success. Unhindered by traditional methods, the new school at Guayaquil was able to avoid old-fashioned stereotypes and to place blind education on the same basis as that of the sighted, he said -- resulting in rapid advances for the blind in terms of social participation and economic opportunity.

Senor Eguiguren -- who is also chairman of the Hadley School's Romance Languages Department -- noted that a high point of progress for Latin Americans came in 1955 with the formation of the Pan American Council of the Blind, under the stimulus of the organized blind of Peru as well as the developing movement in Ecuador (which established its own federation in 1959). The combined efforts of the national groups and the Pan American Council have steadily opened up new opportunities for the blind in education, rehabilitation and employment, he said.

Equally rapid progress in the improvement of blind welfare was reported to the convention by its Saudi Arabian guest, Abdullah El Ghanem, who is director of that country's special education services for the handicapped. Noting that "the general outlook in our country has already undergone a fundamental and radical change, by converting the attitude of pity and charity into one of constructive social renaissance," Mr. El Ghanem observed that the Arab states generally have begun to develop modern educational and vocational institutes.

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has taken vast and firm strides to

catch up with the developed nations ahead of her in this field," he said. "We started in 1958 to work seriously according to the technical methods followed in your country -- now our country provides teaching at the elementary, intermediate and secondary levels for the eager Saudi blind. She also affords vocational training in the appropriate industries for those at the working age -- and indeed is spending money with unparalleled generosity.

"It is a good omen that our modern projects for the blind, despite the fact that they were started only a few years ago, have broadened their horizons with bewildering speed and made vast strides along the path of progress and success."

An optimistic report on conditions for the blind in the Federal Republic of West Germany was presented by Dr. Geissler, who in addition to his vice presidency with the Blindenverband is director of the German Center for the Higher Education of the Blind at Marburg and a member of the Executive Committee of the International Federation of the Blind.

Of West Germany's 45,000 blind persons, around 12,000 (27 percent) are employed in vocational or professional pursuits, Dr. Geissler pointed out -- "a rather impressive figure in view of the fact that more than 50 percent of our blind people are beyond the age of 50 and are no longer working."

The German Republic has some 420 sheltered workshops employing more than 3,000 blind persons, he said -- in contrast to 6,000 who hold jobs in industry or as craftsmen. "Some 30 percent of the working blind are employed in offices in clerical positions, where they have proved their efficiency and have established successful careers.

"The remaining 20 percent work either as independent masseurs, businessmen, musicians, or in the professions. We have blind university professors, clergymen, judges and lawyers, civil servants, teachers, and even some physicians."

Britain's Tom Parker -- whose speech was flavored with rich Welsh accent and an English sense of humor -- emphasized the remarkable improvement of wages and working conditions for the British blind which has been made possible by the affiliation of the National League of the Blind with the nation's powerful trade union movement and the Labor Party.

As a result of these combined efforts, he said, "Since 1951 every blind shop worker throughout Great Britain receives the same rate of

wages as do able-bodied manual workers -- and whenever the sighted workers employed by the city councils get a wage rise, so do the blind. Moreover, the blind are not at the bottom of the grading system, by which all manual workers are ranked on a scale from one to six. We have succeeded in getting all blind workers slotted into group four."

But Mr. Parker stressed that the improvement in the wage situation for blind shop workers has not been matched by equal improvement in what he termed "the legacy of inefficiency and incompetence on the part of shop management." Nevertheless he pointed to a recent dramatic development brought about by the League:

"After years of effort we were able to force the Ministry of Labor into setting up a commission to investigate conditions in all the shops throughout the country. That report has completely justified every one of the complaints about mismanagement we had ever made -- with the result that a new setup has been established, involving nation-wide negotiating machinery in which the League has equal representation with management."

In concluding the international panel discussion, Dr. Freid asked the convention audience to "take note of the remarkable situation before you here this afternoon. This is a program moderated by a Jew and bringing together a Catholic and an Arab among others. Thus you have a meeting of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity -- a lesson in dialogue for this divided world of ours. It is this spirit that unites the brotherhood of the blind -- in which we recognize no barriers of race, of creed, of nationality, or of color."

RESOLUTION 65-03 -- NFB AND IFB

Whereas at its Detroit convention in 1962, the National Federation of the Blind directed its officers and delegates to the World Council of Welfare for the Blind to do all in its power to bring about the establishment of a world organization of the blind and authorized the President to devote financial resources of the organization to the attainment of this end; and

Whereas, at the Phoenix convention in 1964, the National Federation of the Blind unanimously approved and endorsed the creation and establishment of an International Federation of the Blind and authorized the National Federation of the Blind affiliation; and

Whereas, concurrently in Phoenix meetings were held providing a preliminary structure of the International Federation of the Blind which later in that same year, in the city of New York was brought to completion and the International Federation of the Blind formally established; and

Whereas, the members of the National Federation of the Blind believe that, by the association of the blind of different nations in the International Federation of the Blind, and by their exchange of knowledge, experience, and ideas, the cause of all blind people will be enhanced, and the organized blind movement will be strengthened throughout the world; now therefore

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled, in the city of Washington, D. C. , this 7th day of July, 1965, that the National Federation of the Blind confirms its affiliation with the International Federation of the Blind and directs its officers and delegates to the International Federation of the Blind to do all in their power to strengthen and advance the IFB's programs and purposes. The President is authorized and directed further to devote available financial resources of the organization to the attainment of these ends, including meeting the national and international travel and other necessary expenses of the National Federation of the Blind delegates in carrying forward the work of the International Federation of the Blind and in bringing leaders of the blind of other nations to the United States.

Adopted unanimously.

RESOLUTION 65-04 -- SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS

Whereas, frequent requests from blind persons from throughout the world have come to the National Federation of the Blind and the International Federation of the Blind for travel grants, scholarships, and general assistance in education; and

Whereas, educational and vocational facilities for blind persons are meager and in many countries non-existent; and

Whereas, many blind persons in other countries are becoming aware of the possibilities of self-betterment, of the betterment of their fellow blind, and therefore of the betterment of their individual nations,

through education and training; and

Whereas, the training of blind persons in the fields of industrial arts, agriculture and education, with the objective of setting up similar programs adapted to the needs of their individual countries, would do much towards the raising of the status of the blind all over the world; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled in the city of Washington this 7th day of July, 1965, that this organization seek the cooperation of the International Federation of the Blind in initiating a drive for the raising of scholarship funds for students from other lands; and be it further

Resolved that this organization should approach such international organizations as UNESCO, American Friends of the Middle East, Experiment in International Living, Fulbright Program, Ford Foundation, and any other agencies which encourage education and training for overseas persons, for the purpose of obtaining travel grants, stipends, scholarships, and other such helps, for blind individuals.

Adopted unanimously.

RESOLUTION 65-07 -- MISS-A-MEAL FOR I. F. B.

Whereas, the lot of millions of blind persons throughout the world is that of deprivation; and

Whereas, to end this social injustice, the organized blind of several nations have banded together to form the International Federation of the Blind; and

Whereas, it is fitting that blind persons who enjoy the benefits secured through the efforts of the organized blind make at least some small sacrifice as well as personal commitment to the cause of bettering the lot of blind persons everywhere; and

Now therefore be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind at its annual convention in Washington, D. C. this 8th day of July 1965 that this organization recommends that on October 15th of each year, every blind person throughout the world forego one meal and

contribute the monetary cost of that meal to the International Federation of the Blind; and

Be it further resolved that this organization recommends and encourages the promotion of this practice as an annual world-wide observance.

Adopted unanimously.

RESOLUTION 65-11 -- INTERNATIONAL POSTAL REGULATIONS

Whereas, the education, training and rehabilitation of blind persons throughout the world requires quantities of educational and other materials, including braille writers, typewriters, multi-volume braille books, white canes and a multiplicity of other items; and

Whereas, the existing Universal Postal Convention grants an exemption from postage and special rate charges for raised prints for use by the blind which has been defined in Article 138 of the regulation of execution; and

Whereas, the Universal Postal Convention and regulations do not permit the international shipment postage free of the above enumerated items; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled in the city of Washington this 8th day of July, 1965, that the officers and staff of this organization are authorized to do all things necessary to secure a modification of the Universal Postal Convention and the regulations of execution to permit the international free shipment of equipment and materials used for the education, training and rehabilitation of the blind as well as provision of more liberal size and weight requirements.

Adopted unanimously.

CONGRESSMAN PHILIP BURTON SPEAKS

The National Federation of the Blind was hailed as "a pioneer in the formulation of welfare goals for the Great Society" by Congressman Philip Burton of California in a speech before the Washington convention.

The San Francisco Democrat, elected to Congress last fall, is a very well-known figure among the organized blind in his home state. During his three terms in the California legislature, he became a prime strategist and dynamic force in securing the remarkable advances in welfare legislation accomplished in that state over recent years.

He praised the National Federation for its successful efforts "to place on the statute books of the land some of the finest practical ideas and philosophic concepts yet developed on the relation of man to his society, and of society to its less advantaged members." The Congressman asserted that the progressive provisions for the blind enacted in California and other states have served as "demonstration programs" proving that their features can be applied to other needy groups of citizens both efficiently and economically. Representative Burton pointed to California's extension to the disabled of two reforms first achieved in Aid to the Blind: the elimination of relatives' responsibility and the reduction of length-of-residence requirements. "I remember how Chick tenBroek and Russ Kletzing went before the legislature and proved that these pioneering provisions for the blind could serve other welfare programs to the great advantage of all concerned."

Turning to the actions of the present Congress, he said that with the passage of medicare legislation "we shall have behind us many of the goals that our humanitarians and liberals have been urging for 20 years. But that will be only a beginning; what we are now taking, in Chick tenBroek's words, is only the first mincing step on the road to the Great Society. Next we must get down to the real fundamentals.

"Joining hands with you of the Federation, I know we shall bring closer the day when every man, woman and child in America -- regardless of race, creed, color, or handicap -- will enjoy the right of equal opportunity to achieve maximum self-sufficiency and self-fulfillment.

"And in that personal achievement our government and society will stand by to provide an assist whenever disadvantage makes that necessary -- ready to assure that the fruits of this land are plentiful enough for all to share, in equality and dignity and brotherhood. In that great work and that practical dream, I pledge myself to labor along with you and with your leaders."

AGENDA OF ACTION AND ACCOMPLISHMENT

The 1965 convention agenda of the National Federation of the Blind was marked by a wide variety of specialized reports, decisions and discussions touching nearly every field of interest and concern to blind Americans. Vocational opportunities in the law and in telephone answering; the progress of the blind overseas and within the states; the perspectives of social work and of courts toward blind welfare; problems of education, reading and rehabilitation -- all these topics and more came under discussion in the course of the four-day sessions.

Among the regular annual reports presented at various points during the convention were those of the budget and finance committee, read by Perry Sundquist; the White Cane Week report, by Anthony Manino; and the national legislative report by John Nagle, and the endowment fund report by Gysbertus Veldhuizen. The resolutions committee was chaired by Manual Urena and nominations by Bob Whitehead.

Progress Through the Courts

The expanding role of the courts in furthering social progress for the blind and other disadvantaged groups was the subject of an informal talk to the convention by Dr. Jacobus tenBroek on the last day of sessions. Himself a constitutional scholar and holder of three law degrees, the Federation's founder urged that the organized blind plan to make deliberate use of opportunities within the legal and judicial system as an adjunct to the traditional emphasis on progress through legislation.

He pointed to the new outlook of the courts on issues of welfare and equal treatment, as exemplified in recent decisions affecting civil rights, legislative reapportionment, and the right of indigent persons to legal counsel. A significant precedent was seen to lie in the Kirchner case, in which the California Supreme Court held that relatives could not be charged with responsibility for care of a mental patient receiving public institutional services. "We should seek judicial decisions in such areas as relatives' responsibility by bringing test cases into the courts which will force attention to the underlying issues," Dr. tenBroek said.

"But it is more than a matter of test cases. We should also help to lay down the theoretical and philosophical foundations for such decisions by means of seminars, discussions, and the publication of articles in the law reviews. Let us throw our full weight behind this new and affirmative outlook on poverty and dependency which has begun to emerge in the courts of the land."



PANEL OF BLIND ATTORNEYS: A panel discussion featuring five blind lawyers in government service, pictured above, was one of the highlights of the packed convention agenda.



TYPICAL CONVENTION SCENE: The presentation of reports from state affiliates, always an important part of convention activity, is typified in the above picture. California's Muzzy Marcellino is flanked by President Kletzing and Vice President Jernigan.

"Blind Attorneys At Work" -- with emphasis on government employment -- was the theme of a highly informative panel discussion featuring six blind lawyers who have established successful careers in public service. Moderator for the program was the NFB's president, Russ Kletzing, who is Assistant Chief Counsel for the California State Department of Water Resources. Panel participants included H. Richard Hefner, of the U.S. Post Office Department; David L. Norman, Department of Justice; John L. Wilson, also of the Department of Justice; Leonard Suchanek, Office of the General Counsel, General Services Administration; and Fred L. Crawford, presently with the Professional Counseling and Placement Service of the New York Association for the Blind.

Something of the role and stature of the two Justice Department attorneys was indicated by Senator Robert Kennedy in his convention talk the day following the lawyers' panel. He noted that "two of the best lawyers" in the Department during his tenure as Attorney General, "who did more than almost anyone else to bring rights to all of our citizens, were two people who were blind." And with reference specifically to Mr. Norman, the Senator added that "the man in charge of surveying and studying the records in the Civil Rights Division -- records that have to be so carefully appraised . . . this was done under the direction and control of a man who is blind."

Another professional perspective, that of social work, in its relation to the blind and their organizations was explored in an expert and articulate address by Russell Anderson, Assistant Professor at the Columbia University School of Social Work. He pointed out that the National Federation performs a vital function in formulating and communicating the interests of blind clients in ways helpful to the agencies dispensing services.

Books Abroad and At Home

"Let the blind people of the world lift themselves by their bootstraps -- but where they lack even that much, let us supply the bootstraps to lift them by!" So declared the NFB's famed world traveller and unofficial ambassador, Dr. Isabelle L.D. Grant, in reporting to the convention on the progress of the various programs underway to assist blind organizations and individuals throughout the world in their drive toward self-determination. Dr. Grant noted that the generosity of state affiliates in the sending overseas of glasses, books, braille writers, second-hand typewriters, magazines, slates and styluses, and numerous other materials has earned immense good will toward federationism among

the blind in the emerging countries of Asia and Africa.

Another view on the importance of reading matter was presented by Robert S. Bray, chief of the Library of Congress's Division for the Blind, who spoke on "The Contribution that the Organized Blind Can Make to Improve Library Service." Bray urged the audience to visit the libraries for the blind, to make their needs and interests known to librarians, and to work within the states to have the use of library materials made a regular part of the public rehabilitation programs.

"Telephone Answering is No Blind Alley" was the title theme of an informed and witty talk by Bernice Hamer of Massachusetts, who urged blind persons seeking new career opportunities to investigate the answering-service field. Requiring low capital outlays and a monthly overhead of approximately \$90, even with use of electronic jack finders, the field was said to offer reasonable financial returns plus the rewards of active participation in the business life of the local community.

Four members were re-elected to the Federation's national Executive Committee in convention balloting: Ray Dinsmore of Indiana; Victor Johnson, Missouri; Anita O'Shea, Massachusetts; and Harold Reagan, Kentucky. Isabelle Grant, Lyle Von Erichsen, and Jacob Freid were also re-elected as advisory members of the Board of Directors. Other elective positions are scheduled for convention vote next year.

In another form of electoral competition, the delegates confirmed last year's choice of Louisville, Kentucky, as the 1966 convention site, and went on to select host cities for the following two years. The winners were Los Angeles, California, for 1967, and Des Moines, Iowa, for 1968. Kentucky's Affiliate President Robert Whitehead welcomed Federationists to the Louisville convention to be held at the Kentucky Hotel Monday, July 4, through Friday, July 8, 1966.

State Reports

One of the essential activities of every national convention is the comparative analysis of legislative progress -- of the record of victories and defects -- based upon the reports of state affiliates. This year, as always, the picture across the country was a kaleidoscope of wins, losses and stalemates -- with some successes that would be remarkable in any year. The most sweeping victories were reported by Indiana's Ray Dinsmore, who told of the passage of bills in his state eliminating relatives' responsibility, assuring a minimum wage scale for sheltered shop workers, granting an additional \$1,000 exemption to blind persons owning real property, lowering the residence requirement from three years

to one year, lifting liens against the estate of blind persons five years off the rolls, and creating a new advisory committee with mandatory participation of the organized blind.

Other strong gains reported during the year included: California, which outlawed discrimination in training and hiring of blind teachers and repealed the residence requirement for rehab services, including sheltered shops; Nevada, where a dramatic fight was won to re-establish a separate division of services for the blind; Washington, where the residence requirement was knocked down from five years to six months and the advisory committee to blind programs was authorized as advisory to the state welfare department; New York, which passed a bill eliminating the responsibility of grandparents and grandchildren as relatives and another providing for three instructors in white cane travel techniques; Minnesota, which secured legislative support for the blind client's right to free choice of rehabilitation services; Wyoming, which established a priority for blind vending stand operators in state and local buildings.

Similar gains were reported from Iowa, where a greatly increased appropriation was obtained for the State Commission for the Blind; Montana, where the lawmakers approved a bill providing a home teacher for the blind; Idaho, where bills were enacted liberalizing merit system exams for blind applicants, protecting blind persons travelling with guide dogs and giving them access to public accommodations, and facilitating the teaching program for blind public school students; Texas, where the blind have gained approval of many goals through an authoritative study report on rehabilitation and other services; South Carolina, which has established a legislative study committee to investigate the entire complex of programs for the blind; and Rhode Island, where blind stand operators were exempted from imposing a state sales tax on products sold.

CONVENTION MINIATURES

One day during the Washington convention, the Ken Jernigans invited 55 members of the Iowa delegation to their hotel suite for lunch. Anyone who thinks the handling of the banquet required skill should have been present at that luncheon. An international menu was featured: Danish ham, Holland cheese, Italian pastrami, German bread, Greek balaklava, and American hot dogs. . . . C. Rhodes Gardiner and Dora Gardiner, of Maine, report that their 11-year-old grandson had saved his money for three years so he could attend the NFB's Washington

convention. On the third day he ventured this judgment: "I used to be envious of my friends who took a trip to Florida during the winter vacation. But I think this is a much better trip, as we are meeting such important people -- and all they met were rich folks."

Jim Fall relates that the Arizona delegation received a free limousine ride from the Friendship Airport to downtown Washington on their arrival. Not knowing whether other conventioners also got free rides, he says: "We wondered if it was because we looked so needy, or was it because they felt sorry for anyone from Goldwater territory?" . . . Jan Omvig of Des Moines went to New York immediately after the convention, where she visited the United Nations, shopped on Fifth Avenue, and saw the stage production of "Hello Dolly."

Thanks to George Bonsky for this observation: "The Ohio delegation -- which came to the convention by bus, train, plane and private car -- believe the convention at Washington showed that there will be only one National Federation of the Blind." . . . Between convention sessions, tricksters were at work with some of the state banners -- hiding them and hanging them from balconies. The most energetic of these jokers blotted out the "Mis" at the beginning and the "i" at the end of "Missouri," thus leaving the "show me" delegation with a "sour" banner. . . . Ray Benson, (Ezra to those who know and love him), a student at the Iowa Orientation Center, kept his muscles in shape at the convention by climbing to the top of the Washington Monument each day while there.

En route home from Washington on July 11, Victor and Xena Johnson of St. Louis encountered the bus carrying Cotton Busby and wife, Jack and Martha Kelly, and Nancy and Sonia Carr, all of Kansas City -- and took them to lunch between buses. All agreed that the 1965 convention was the finest yet, unlikely to be surpassed for many moons. . . . While packing her suitcase to attend the Washington convention, Ethel Mahaney, veteran Federationist (and MONITOR contributor), had the misfortune to fall and break her hip. . . . On Friday, July 9, Elwyn Hemken of Blairsburg, Iowa, took his son Brad, Neil Butler's son Mike, Kelly Smith's son Tom, and Nic tenBroek to see the Washington Senators play a red-hot double header.

The Myles Crosbys of New Jersey celebrated their 22nd wedding anniversary on Sunday, July 11, in their room at the Adult Education Center, University of Maryland, where the NFB held its two-day leadership seminar following its own 25th anniversary convention. . . . Logistics for the seminar presented some unusual problems. The bus was

scheduled to leave for the U. of Maryland at 9 A.M. About 9:15, Tiny Beedle and Muz Marcelino loaded their bags aboard and ducked back into the hotel for some forgotten item -- emerging two minutes later to find no bus, no bags. . . . After the bus got going it became part of a cavalcade which included the Capps and Crosbys, with a guide in the lead. Unluckily the guide had never been to the University of Maryland building before except during daylight -- with the result that the three cars and the 44-passenger bus zig-zagged through the Maryland campus and backed out of a few blind alleys before arriving on target.

Virginia Nagle celebrated her birthday on Saturday, July 10, gathering with a group of NFB officers and others at Trader Vic's. . . . The phone rang at three A.M. in the headquarters suite one convention day, and an anxious voice inquired: "Who's on the desk?" It was Mildred Hamby, in charge of handling the headquarters phones: she feared she'd overslept and that it was mid-day. . . . Said Hawaii's tiny Congresswoman Patsy Mink, when her turn came at the banquet mike: "Reference was made earlier by your toastmaster to 'congressmen large and small'; I must be the only small congressman here."

On Thursday, July 1, death claimed Wilbur Radcliff, longtime Federationist, leader in the California Council of the Blind and teacher-counselor in the Division for the Blind of the State Department of Rehabilitation. Since September 1961, Wilbur had undergone two major open-heart operations. Seemingly well on his way to regaining perfect health, he had returned to work and was planning to attend the NFB convention in Washington. Wilbur graduated from the University of California at Los Angeles, and took postgraduate studies at its School of Social Welfare before entering the state teacher service in 1955. In 1959 Russ Kletzing, then president of the California Council, appointed him as parliamentarian of Council conventions, a position he held through succeeding administrations with grace and mastery. Wilbur is survived by his wife, Frances, and his mother.

The Ken Jernigans drove to the convention in their 1958 Chrysler, which now has 116,000 miles to its credit. The buggy apparently still does a respectable clip, for in Pennsylvania they were stopped for speeding. Glen Sterling, new Commission staff member, was in the driver's seat at the time. Although Merv Flander and Ken Jernigan went with Glen and served as legal counsel, a \$15 fine was duly assessed and paid. . . . A tremendous thunder and lightning storm broke out in Washington on the afternoon of July 5. At that moment a delegate to the convention entered a room at the Mayflower Hotel. "It's easy to tell this is a session of the resolutions committee," he announced unceremoniously.

At his vending stand in St. Louis, Victor Johnson's customers have been calling him a TV star. It seems that a television documentary from Washington, featuring Victor and Isabelle Grant, was shown twice the same day in the home town. . . .Incidentally, a blind friend reports from St. Louis that he heard numerous references to the Washington convention almost daily on the radio, under the heading of "news from the capitol". . . .Overnight during the convention, the equipment on which NFB Treasurer Franklin VanVliet was recording the sessions was stolen. It was never recovered, but luckily the tapes were left behind by the thief; also fortunately, the lost machinery turned out to be covered by insurance.

When Anna tenBroek placed the NFB's pin on Vice President Humphrey's lapel, he honored her with a kiss. Asked about it later by her father, she said: "There's nothing slow about me -- I kissed him right back! . . . The funniest of the door prize drawings (which were scattered strategically by Ken Jernigan throughout the convention) came when teetotaller Lillian Whitehead won a fifth of high-priced bourbon. "If you don't want it, we'll draw again," said Ken. "No," replied Lillian. "I'll give it to Harold Reagan." . . .Some 130 Federationists purchased ebony elephants from Ceylon. The money (\$130) will be turned over to the International Federation of the Blind.

Jim Witte, of Iowa Orientation Center fame, views with mixed feelings the convention appearance of Senator Robert Kennedy. When several people asked the senator for an autograph, it is reported that he borrowed Jim's pen and forgot to return it. Jim is especially disturbed since he is believed to be a staunch Goldwater fan. . . .When John Nagle checked out of the Mayflower Hotel, the cashier making up his bill asked: "Does 120 telephone calls seem too many, Mr. Nagle?" John thought out loud: "Let me see -- 60 or 70 calls to the 'Hill' on our disability bill, a dozen calls apiece on the Kennedy and Humphrey arrangements. . . .As a matter of fact, 120 is surely too little."

Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Owen -- Charles and Melva, to members of the Voicespondent Club -- were guests of the New York State delegation at the convention banquet. The couple were recipients of the Newell Perry award given by the Empire State Association at their 1964 convention. . . .Tom Bickford, former Californian and onetime Iowa rehab counselor, now studying at Georgetown University, made a braille map of a three-block area surrounding the Mayflower Hotel, convention headquarters. Straight lines representing streets were narrow black strips of tape on a white background with the braille name on the left at the end of the tape. Avenues, which run on a slant in Washington, were wider strips of manila paper with the name in braille. Visitors at the information desk found this map a great help.

Sixteen Iowans visited the Smithsonian Institute on July 5 and received a conducted tour of two of the buildings. Special exception was made and they were permitted to "braille" anything that was not under glass. Needless to say, reports Neil Butler, the animals and bones received a much needed dusting. . . . Twenty-one of those intrepid Iowans came to the Washington convention in a bus recently donated to the Iowa Orientation Center. The students had rearranged the seats so that they were back to back with four formica tables placed to allow for card playing and braille reading on trips. . . . On its return trip to Iowa, the bus left early Saturday morning with plans for a stopover at Gettysburg to examine the battlefield and monuments. By the time the bus actually reached Gettysburg later the same day, the week of conventioning had apparently taken its toll: it is reliably reported that many of the 21 took a nap while the electric map (with accompanying explanation) was re-enacting the progress of the historic battle.

Thus endeth the saga of the Silver Anniversary Convention of the National Federation of the Blind. We shall not soon see its like again.

On to Louisville!

PURCHASE OF CONVENTION TAPES

Persons wishing to purchase tape recordings of the NFB's 1965 convention may secure them from Franklin VanVliet, 207 Fisherville Road, Penacook, New Hampshire. The price is \$25 for the full set of tapes. Individual sessions may also be ordered.

BLINDNESS -- CONCEPTS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

An Address Delivered at the
25th Anniversary Convention of the
National Federation of the Blind
6 July 1965, Mayflower Hotel
Washington, D. C.

by Kenneth Jernigan
Director, Iowa Commission for the Blind
First Vice President, National Federation of the Blind

When an individual becomes blind, he faces two major problems: First, he must learn the skills and techniques which will enable him to carry on as a normal, productive citizen in the community; and second, he must become aware of and learn to cope with public attitudes and misconceptions about blindness--attitudes and misconceptions which go to the very roots of our culture and permeate every aspect of social behavior and thinking.

The first of these problems is far easier to solve than the second. For it is no longer theory but established fact that, with proper training and opportunity, the average blind person can do the average job in the average place of business--and do it as well as his sighted neighbor. The blind can function as scientists, farmers, electricians, factory workers, and skilled technicians. They can perform as housewives, lawyers, teachers, or laborers. The skills of independent mobility, communication, and the activities of daily living are known, available, and acquirable. Likewise, the achievement of vocational competence poses no insurmountable barrier.

In other words the real problem of blindness is not the blindness itself--not the acquisition of skills or techniques or competence. The real problem is the lack of understanding and the misconceptions which exist. It is no accident that the word "blind" carries with it connotations of inferiority and helplessness. The concept goes back to primitive times when existence was at an extremely elemental level. Eyesight and the power to see were equated with light, and light (whether daylight or firelight) meant security and safety. Blindness was equated with darkness, and darkness meant danger and evil. The blind person could not hunt effectively or dodge a spear. In our day society and social values have changed. In civilized countries there is now no great premium on dodging a spear, and hunting has dwindled to the status of an occasional pastime. The blind are able to compete on terms of equality in the full current of active life. The primitive conditions of jungle and cave are

gone, but the primitive attitudes about blindness remain. The blind are thought to live in a world of "darkness," and darkness is equated with evil, stupidity, sin, and inferiority.

Do I exaggerate? I would that it were so. Consider the very definition of the word "blind," the reflection of what it means in the language, its subtle shades and connotations. The 1962 printing of the World Publishing Company's college edition of Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language defines "blind" as follows: "without the power of sight; sightless; eyeless. lacking insight or understanding. done without adequate directions or knowledge: as, blind search. reckless; unreasonable. not controlled by intelligence: as, blind destiny. insensible. drunk. illegible; indistinct. In architecture, false. walled up: as, a blind window." The 1960 edition of Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary says: "blind. Sightless. Lacking discernment; unable or unwilling to understand or judge; as, blind to faults. Made without reason or discrimination; as, a blind choice. Apart from intelligent direction or control; as, blind chance. Insensible; as, a blind stupor; hence, drunk. For sightless persons; as, a blind asylum. Unintelligible; illegible; as, blind writing."

There are a number of reasons why it is extremely difficult to change public attitudes about blindness. For one thing, despite the fact that many achievements are being made by the blind and that a good deal of constructive publicity is being given to these achievements, there are strong counter currents of uninformed and regressive publicity and propaganda. It is hard to realize, for instance, that anyone still exists who actually believes the blind are especially gifted in music or that they are particularly suited to weaving or wickerwork. It is hard to realize that any well educated person today believes that blind people are compensated for their loss of sight by special gifts and talents. Yet, I call your attention to a section on blindness appearing in a book on government and citizenship which is in current use in many public high schools throughout our country. Not in some bygone generation, but this very fall hundreds of thousands of ninth grade students will study this passage:

Caring for the Handicapped

The blind, the deaf, the dumb, the crippled, and the insane and the feeble-minded are sometimes known collectively as the defective -- people who are lacking some normal faculty or power. Such people often need to be placed in some special institution in order to receive proper attention.

Many blind, deaf, and crippled people can do a considerable amount of work. The blind have remarkable talent in piano-

tuning, weaving, wickerwork, and the like. The deaf and dumb are still less handicapped because they can engage in anything that does not require taking or giving orders by voice.¹

I confess to being surprised when I learned that the book containing the foregoing passage would be used as a text by several of our large city school systems in Iowa this fall. It occurred to me to wonder whether the text was unique or whether its "enlightened" views were held by other authors in the field. The results of my investigation were not reassuring. I call your attention to the section on blindness appearing in another text in common use throughout the high schools of our nation.

The blind may receive aid from the states and the federal government, if their families are not able to keep them from want. There are over one hundred institutions for the blind in the United States, many of which are supported wholly or partly by taxes. Sometimes it seems as if blind people are partly compensated for their misfortune by having some of their other talents developed with exceptional keenness. Blind people can play musical instruments as well as most of those who can see, and many activities where a keen touch of the fingers is needed can be done by blind people wonderfully well. Schools for the blind teach their pupils music and encourage them to take part in some of the outdoor sports that other pupils enjoy.²

If this is not enough to make the point, let me give you a quotation from still another high school text in current use:

Kinds of Dependents.

There are many persons who do not take a regular part in community life and its affairs, either because they cannot or will not. Those who cannot, may be divided into the following classes - (1) The physically handicapped: the blind, the deaf, and the crippled; (2) the mentally handicapped: the feeble-minded and the insane; (3) the unemployed: those incapable of work, the misfits, and the victims of depression; and (4) the orphaned: those children left in the care of the state or in private institutions. The community should care for these people or help them to care for themselves as much as possible.

Those who will not play their part in community life are the criminals. . . schools have been established where the blind are taught to read by the use of raised letters called the Braille system. They are also taught to do other things such as to weave, make brushes, tune pianos

mend and repair furniture, and to play musical instruments... It is far better for the blind to attend these institutions than to remain at home because here they can learn to contribute to their own happiness.³

In attempting to change public attitudes, not only must we overcome the effects of Webster's dictionary and a host of textbooks, but we must take into account another factor as well. Several years ago the agency that I head was attempting to help a young woman find employment as a secretary. She was a good typist, could fill out forms, handle erasures, take dictation, and otherwise perform competently. She was neat in her person and could travel independently anywhere she wanted to go. She was also totally blind. I called the manager of a firm which I knew had a secretarial opening and asked him if he would consider interviewing the blind person in question. He told me that he knew of the "wonderful work" which blind persons were doing and that he was most "sympathetic" to our cause but that his particular set-up would not be suitable. As he put it, "Our work is very demanding. Carbons must be used and forms must be filled out. Speed is at a premium, and a great deal of work must be done each day. Then, there is the fact that our typewriters are quite a ways from the bathroom, and we cannot afford to use the time of another girl to take the blind person to the toilet."

At this stage I interrupted to tell him that during the past few years new travel techniques had been developed and that the girl I had in mind was quite expert in getting about, that she was able to go anywhere she wished with ease and independence. He came back with an interruption of his own.

"Oh, I know what a wonderful job the blind do in traveling about and accomplishing things for themselves. You see I know a blind person. I know Miss X, and I know what a good traveler she is and how competent." I continued to try to persuade him, but I knew my case was lost. For, you see, I also know Miss X, and she is one of the poorest travelers and one of the most helpless blind people I have ever known. There is a common joke among many blind persons that she gets lost in her own bedroom, and I guess maybe she does.

The man with whom I was talking was not being insincere; far from it. He thought that the ordinary blind person, by all reasons and common sense, should be completely helpless and unable to travel at all. He thought that it was wonderful and remarkable that the woman he knew could do as well as she did. When compared with what he thought could be normally expected of the blind, her performance was outstanding. Therefore, when I told him that the person that I had in mind could travel independently, he thought that I meant the kind of travel he had seen from

Miss X. We were using the same words, and we were both sincere, but our words meant different things to each of us. I tremble to think what he thought I meant by "good typing" and "all around competence."

When I go into a community to speak to a group and someone says to me, "Oh, I know exactly what you mean; I know what blind people can do, because I know a blind person," I often cringe. I say to myself, "And what kind of blind person do you know?"

This gives emphasis (if, indeed, emphasis is needed) to the constantly observed truth that all blind people are judged by one. If a person has known a blind man who is especially gifted as a musician, he is likely to believe that all of the blind are good at music. Many of us are living examples of the fallacy of that misconception. Some years ago I knew a man who had hired a blind person in his place of business. The blind man was, incidentally, fond of the bottle and was, (after, no doubt, a great deal of soul searching on the part of the employer) fired. This employer still refuses to consider hiring another blind person. As he puts it, "They simply drink too much."

Once I was attending a national convention made up largely of blind people, and a waitress in the hotel dining room said to me, "I just think it is wonderful how happy blind people are. I have been observing your folks, and you all seem to be having such a good time!"

I said to the waitress, "But did you ever observe a group of sighted conventioners! When they get away from their homes and the routine of daily life, they usually let their hair down and relax a bit. Blind people are about as happy and about as unhappy as anybody else."

Not only is there a tendency to judge all blind people by one, but there is also a tendency to judge all blind people by the least effective and least competent members of the larger, sighted population. In other words, if it can't be done by a person with sight, a "normal" person, then, how can it possibly be done by a blind person? One of the best illustrations of this point that I have ever seen occurred some time ago when an attempt was being made to secure employment for a blind man in a corn oil factory. The job involved the operation of a press into which a large screw-type plunger fed corn. Occasionally the press would jam, and it was necessary for the operator to shut it off and clean it out before resuming the operation. The employer had tentatively agreed to hire the blind man, but when we showed up to finalize the arrangements, the deal was off. The employer explained that since our last visit, one of his sighted employees had got his hand caught in

the press, and the press had chewed it off. It developed that the sighted employee had been careless. When the press had jammed he had not shut it off, but had tried to clean it while it was still running. The employer said, "This operation is dangerous! Why, even a sighted man got hurt doing it! I simply couldn't think of hiring a blind man in this position!" It was to no avail that we urged and reasoned. We might have told him (but didn't) that if he intended to follow logic, perhaps he should have refused to hire any more sighted people on the operation. After all, it wasn't a blind man who had made the mistake.

There is still another factor which makes it difficult to change the public attitudes about blindness. All of us need to feel superior, and the problem is compounded by the fact that almost everyone secretly feels a good deal of insecurity and inadequacy -- a good deal of doubt regarding status and position. On more than one occasion people have come to the door of a blind man to collect for the heart fund, cancer research, or some other charity, and have then turned away in embarrassment when they have found they were dealing with a blind person. Their comment is usually to the effect, "Oh, I am sorry! I didn't know! I couldn't take the money from a blind person!"

In many instances, I am happy to say, the blind person has insisted on making a contribution. The implication is clear and should not be allowed to go unchallenged. It is that the blind are unable to participate in regular community life, that they should not be expected to assume responsibilities, that they should receive but not give as others do.

More than once I have seen confusion and embarrassment in a restaurant when it came the blind person's turn to treat for coffee or similar items. At the cash register there was an obvious feeling of inappropriateness and shame on the part of the sighted members of the group at having restaurant employees and others see a blind person pay for their food. Something turns, of course, on the question of means; and the blind person should certainly not pay all of the time; but he should do his part like any other member of the group.

Recently I registered at a hotel, and the bellboy carried my bags to my room. When I started to tip him (and it was a fairly generous tip), he moved back out of the way with some embarrassment. He said, "Oh, no, I couldn't! I am a gentleman!" When I persisted he said, "I am simply not that hard up!"

It is of significance to note that he had an amputated hand and that he was quite short of stature. What kind of salary he made I do not know, but I would doubt that it was comparatively very high. His manner and

tone and implication of his words said very clearly, "I may be in a bad way and have it rough, but at least I am more fortunate than you. I am grateful that my situation is not worse than it is." There was certainly no ill intent. In fact, there were both charity and kindness. But charity and kindness are sometimes misplaced, and they are not always constructive forces.

Let me now say something about the agencies and organizations doing work with the blind. Employees and administrators of such agencies are members of the public, too, and are conditioned by the same forces that affect other people in the total population. Some of them (in fact, many) are enlightened individuals who thoroughly understand the problems to be met and who work with vigor and imagination to erase the stereotypes and propagate a new way of thought concerning blindness and its problems; but some of them (unfortunately, far too many) have all the misconceptions and erroneous ideas which characterize the public at large. Regrettably there are still people who go into work with the blind because they cannot be dominant in their homes or social or business lives, and they feel (whether they verbalize it or not) that at least they can dominate and patronize the blind. This urge often expresses itself in charitable works and dedicated sincerity, but this does not mitigate its unhealthy nature or make it any less misguided or inappropriate.

Such agencies are usually characterized by a great deal of talk about "professionalism" and by much high-flown jargon. They believe that blindness is more than the loss of eyesight; that it involves multiple and mysterious personality alterations. Many of them believe that the newly blinded person requires the assistance of a psychiatrist in making the adjustment to blindness, and indeed, that the psychiatrist and psychotherapy should play an important part in the training programs for the blind. They believe that the blind are a dependent class and that the agencies must take care of them throughout their entire lives. But let some of these people speak for themselves. One agency administrator has said: "After he is once trained and placed, the average disabled person can fend for himself. In the case of the blind, it has been found necessary to set up a special state service agency which will supply them not only rehabilitation training but other services for the rest of lives." The agencies "keep in constant contact with them as long as they live."

This is not an isolated comment. An agency psychiatrist has this to say: "All visible deformities require special study. Blindness is a visible deformity and all blind persons follow a pattern of dependency."

Or consider this by the author of a well-known book on blindness:

"With many persons, there was an expectation in the establishment of the early schools... that the blind in general would thereby be rendered capable of earning their own support--a view that even at the present is shared in some quarters. It would have been much better if such a hope had never been entertained, or if it had existed in a greatly modified form. A limited acquaintance of a practical nature with the blind as a whole and their capabilities has usually been sufficient to demonstrate the weakness of this conception."⁴

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the foregoing quotations represent individual instances and not the total judgement of the agencies and organizations doing work with the blind. Opinions and approaches vary as much with the agencies as with the general public. I would merely make the point here that being a professional worker in the field does not insure one against the false notions and erroneous stereotypes which characterize the public at large.

For that matter, being a blind person is no passport to infallibility either. Public attitudes about the blind too often become the attitudes of the blind. The blind are part of the general public. They tend to see themselves as others see them. They too often accept the public view of their limitations and thus do much to make those limitations a reality. There is probably not a single blind person in the world today (present company included) who has not sold himself short at one time or another.

At one time in my life I ran a furniture shop, making and selling the furniture myself. I designed and put together tables, smoke stands, lamps, and similar items. I sawed and planed, drilled and measured, fitted and sanded. I did every single operation except the final finish work, the staining and varnishing. After all, as I thought, one must be reasonable and realistic. If anyone had come to me at that time and said that I was selling myself short, that I should not automatically assume that a blind person could not do varnishing, I think I would have resented it very much. I think I would have said something to this effect: "I have been blind all my life, and I think I know what a blind person can do; you have to use common sense. You can't expect a blind person to drive a truck, and you can't expect him to varnish furniture either."

Later, when I went to California to teach at the Orientation Center, I saw blind people doing varnishing as a matter of course. By and by I did it myself. I can tell you that the experience caused me to do a great deal of serious thinking. It was not the fact that I had hired someone else to do the varnishing in those earlier days in my shop. Perhaps it would have been more efficient, under any circumstances, for me to have hired this particular operation done so that I could spend my time more profitably.

It was the fact that I had automatically assumed that a blind person could not do the work, that I had sold myself short without realizing it, all the while believing myself to be a living exemplification of progressive faith in the competence of the blind--a most deflating experience. It made me wonder then as it does today: How many things that I take for granted as being beyond the competence of the blind are easily within reach? How many things that I now regard as requiring eyesight really require only insight, an insight which I do not possess because of the conditioning I have received from my culture, and because of the limitations of my imagination?

There is also the temptation to have our cake and eat it too, the temptation to accept the special privileges or shirk the responsibility when it suits us and then to demand equal treatment when we want it.

Some years ago when Boss Ed Crump was supreme in Memphis, an interesting event occurred each year. There was an annual football game, which was called the "ball game for the blind." Mr. Crump's friends went about contacting the general public and all of the businesses of the area soliciting donations and purchases of tickets. Probably a good deal of arm twisting and shaming were done when necessary. The total take was truly impressive. In the neighborhood of one hundred thousand dollars was raised each year. The money was then equally divided among all known blind persons in the county, and a check was sent to each. It usually amounted to about one hundred dollars and was known as the "Christmas bonus for the blind."

Most of the blind whom I knew from Shelby County gladly received these checks, and most of the rest of us in the state (either secretly or openly) envied them their great good fortune. How short sighted we all were! The blind people of Memphis were not being done a favor! They were being robbed of a birthright. As they gave their money and bought their tickets, how many business men closed their minds (although without conscious thought) to the possibility of a blind employee? How many blind people traded equal status in the community, social and civic acceptance, and productive and remunerative employment for one hundred dollars a year? What a bargain!

As I said in the beginning, the real problem of blindness is not the loss of eyesight but the misconceptions and misunderstanding which exist. The public (whether it be the general public, the agencies, or the blind themselves) has created the problem and must accept responsibility for solving it. In fact, great strides are being made in this direction.

First must come awareness, awareness on our own part, and a thorough consistency of philosophy and dedication of purpose; an increasing

program of public education must be waged; vigilance must be maintained to see that the agencies for the blind are staffed with the right kind of people, with the right kind of philosophy; and the movement of the self organization of the blind must be encouraged and strengthened. This last is a cardinal point, for any disadvantaged group must be heard with its own voice, must lead in the achievement of its own salvation.

Accomplishments are made of dreams and drudgeries, of hope and hard work. The blind of the nation are now moving toward a destiny, a destiny which nothing can prevent, a destiny of full equality and full participation in community life.

That destiny will be achieved when the day comes on which we can say with pleasure and satisfaction what we must now say with concern and consternation: "Public attitudes about the blind become the attitudes of the blind. The blind see themselves as others see them."

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- 1 Building Citizenship, McCrocklin, James; 1961, Allyn and Bacon, Inc. pub. ; Boston, pp. 244.
 - 2 Good Citizenship, Hughes, R. O. ; 1949, Allyn and Bacon, pub. ; Boston pp. 55
 - 3 Fundamentals of Citizenship, Blough, G. L. and David S. Switzer, and Jack T. Johnson; Laidlaw Brothers, pub., Chicago, pp. 164-167.
 - 4 From an address entitled "Within the Grace of God" by Professor Jacobus tenBroek, delivered at the 1956 convention of the National Federation of the Blind in San Francisco and may be obtained by writing to Professor tenBroek at 2652 Shasta Road, Berkeley 8, California.
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THE FEDERATION AT TWENTY-FIVE: POSTVIEW AND PREVIEW

An Address Delivered By
Professor Jacobus tenBroek
At the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Convention Banquet
The National Federation of the Blind
Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D. C. 8 July 1965

Oscar Wilde tells us: "Most modern calendars mar the sweet simplicity of our lives by reminding us that each day that passes is the anniversary of some perfectly uninteresting event." We must approach the task of celebration and review with some pause and some humility, neither exaggerating our importance nor underestimating it. It is my task in this spirit to capsulize our history, convey our purposes, and contemplate our future.

The career of our movement has not been a tranquil one. It has grown to maturity the hard way. The external pressures have been unremitting. It has been counseled by well-wishers that all would be well--and it has learned to resist. It has been attacked by agencies and administrators--and learned to fight back. It has been scolded by guardians and caretakers--and learned to talk back. It has cut its eye teeth on legal and political struggle, sharpened its wits through countless debates, broadened its mind and deepened its voice by incessant contest. Most important of all, it has never stopped moving, never stopped battling, never stopped marching toward its goals of security, equality, and opportunity for all the Nation's blind. It has risen from poverty to substance, from obscurity to global reputation.

It is fitting that the anniversary of our own independence movement should coincide with that of the nation itself. The two revolutions were vastly different in scope but identical in principle. We too memorialize a day of independence-- independence from a wardship not unlike that of the American colonists. Until the advent of the National Federation, the blind people of America were taken care of but not represented; protected but not emancipated; seen but rarely heard.

Like Patrick Henry on the eve of revolution, we who are blind knew in 1940 that if we wished to be free, if we meant to gain those inestimable privileges of participation for which we had so long yearned, then we must organize for purposes of self-expression and collective action; then we must concert to engage in a noble struggle.

In that spirit the National Federation of the Blind was founded. In that spirit it has persevered. In that spirit it will prevail.

When the founding fathers of the Federation came together at Wilkes-Barre, to form a union, they labored in a climate of skepticism and scorn. The experts said it couldn't be done; the agencies for the blind said it shouldn't be done. "When the blind lead the blind," declared the prophets of doom, "all shall fall into the ditch."

But the Federation was born without outside assistance. It stood upright without a helping hand. It is still on its feet today.

At the outset we declared our independence. In the past 25 years we have established it. Today we may say that the National Federation has arrived in America -- and is here to stay. That is truly the "new outlook for the blind."

We have not reached our present standing, as all of you know, by inertia and idleness. The long road of our upward movement is divided into three phases -- corresponding to the first decade, the second decade, and the third half-decade of our existence as an organization. Each of these three periods, though a part of a continuum, has had a different emphasis and a different character. Let us look at each of them.

The Federation was not born with a silver spoon in its mouth -- but, like the Nation itself, it was born with the parchment of its principles in its hand. Our basic philosophy and purposes -- even most of our long-range programs -- existed full-panoplied at our origin. We were dedicated to the principles of security with freedom; of opportunity without prejudice; of equality in the law and on the job. We have never needed to alter or modify those goals, let alone compromise them. We have never faltered in our confidence that they are within our reach. We have never failed to labor for their implementation in political, legal, and economic terms.

The paramount problems of our first decade, the 1940's, were not so much qualitative as quantitative: we had the philosophy and the programs, but we lacked the membership and the means. The workers were few and the cupboard was bare.

Each month as we received our none too bountiful salary as a young instructor at the University of Chicago Law School, Hazel and I would distribute it among the necessities of life: food, clothing, rent, Federation stamps, mimeograph paper and ink, other supplies. So did we share our one-room apartment. The mimeograph paper

took far more space in our closet than did our clothes. We had to move the mimeograph machine before we could let down the wall bed to retire at night. If on a Sunday we walked along Chicago's lake front for an hour, four or five fewer letters were written, dropping our output for that day to fewer than twenty-five.

The decade of the forties was a time of building: and build we did, from a scattering of seven state affiliates at our first convention to more than four times that number in 1950. It was a time of pioneering: and pioneer we did, by searching out new paths of opportunity and blazing organizational trails where no blind man had before set foot. It was a time of collective self-discovery and self-reliance: of rising confidence in our joint capacity to do the job -- to hitch up our own wagon train and hitch it up we did.

In the decade of the forties we proved our organizational capacity, established our representative character, initiated legislative programs on the state and national levels, and spoke with the authority and voice of the blind speaking for themselves. In these very terms the decade of the fifties was a time both of triumph and travail. The triumph was not unmixed but the travail was passing.

Our numbers escalated to a peak of forty-seven statewide affiliates with membership running to the tens of thousands. Our resources multiplied through a campaign of fundraising. Our voice was amplified with the inauguration of the BRAILLE MONITOR as a regular publication in print, braille and tape, which carried the word of federationism to the farthest parts of the Nation and many distant lands.

With the funds to back us up, with a broad base of membership behind us, with constructive programs of opportunity and enlargement, with growing public recognition and understanding, the Federation in the fifties galvanized its energies along an expanding front. We sent teams of blind experts into various states, on request of the governors, to prepare master plans for the reform of their welfare services to the blind. We aided our state affiliates in broad programs of legislative and administrative improvement in welfare and rehabilitation. We participated in opening the teaching profession to qualified blind teachers in a number of states. We assisted in bringing to completion the campaign to secure white cane laws in all of the states so that blind men might walk abroad anywhere in the land sustained by a faith justified by law. We shared with others the credit for infusing into federal welfare the constructive objective of self-care and self-support,

progressive improvements in the aid grant and matching formula, and the addition of disability insurance. Over the unflagging opposition of the Social Security Administration, we secured the acceptance by Congress, in progressive amounts, the principle of exempt income for blind aid recipients; at first temporary, and finally permanent permission for Pennsylvania and Missouri to retain their separate and rehabilitative systems of public assistance; and we began to lay the groundwork by which our blind workers in the sheltered shops might secure the status and rights of employees. We pushed, pulled and persuaded the civil service into first modifying, then relaxing, and finally scrapping its policy of discrimination against blind applicants for the public service.

In these enterprises, as against the doctrinaire, aloof resistance of administration, we had the cordial good will, practical understanding, and humane regard of an ever-growing number of Congressmen.

All of a sudden, in the furious fifties, the National Federation of the Blind was very much noticed. Our organizations became the objects of intense attention -- if rarely of affection -- on the part of the agencies, administrators, and their satellite groups which had dominated the field.

As the organized blind movement grew in affluence and in influence, as affiliates sprang up in state after state, county after county, across the land, as a groundswell of protest rose against the dead ends of sheltered employment and segregated training, of welfare programs tied to the poor law and social workers bound up in red tape, the forces of custodialism and control looked down from their light-houses and fought back.

"The National Federation of the Blind," said its president in 1957, "stands today an embattled organization. Our motives have been impugned; our purposes reviled; our integrity aspersed; our representative character denied. Plans have been laid, activities undertaken, and concerted actions set in motion for the clear and unmistakable purpose of bringing about our destruction. Nothing less is sought than our extinction as an organization."

No Federationist who lived through that decade can forget how the battle was joined -- in the historic struggle for the right of self-expression and free association. The single most famous piece of legislation our movement has produced -- one which was never passed by Congress but which made its full weight felt and its message known throughout

the world of welfare and the country of the blind -- was the Kennedy-Baring Bill.

It is fitting that John F. Kennedy, then the junior senator from Massachusetts, was a sponsor of that bill of rights for the blind, who gave his name and voice to the defense of our right to organize.

Eight years ago he rose in the Senate to introduce and speak for his bill "to protect the right of the blind to self-expression." He told how some 43 state associations of blind persons had become "federated into a single nationwide organization, the National Federation of the Blind." He declared: "It is important that these views be expressed freely and without interference. It is important that these views be heard and considered by persons charged with responsibility..." He pointed out that in various communities this freedom had "been prejudiced by a few professional workers in programs for the blind." He urged that "our blind citizens be protected against any exercise of this kind of influence or authority to interfere with their freedom of self-expression through organizations of the blind."

The Kennedy Bill was simple and sweeping in its purposes: to insure to the blind the right to organize without intimidation; and to insure to the blind the right to speak and to be heard through systematic means of consultation with the responsible agencies of government.

That bill of rights was not enacted; but it gained its ends in other ways. Lengthy and dramatic public hearings were held by a committee of Congress, at which dozens of blind witnesses both expert and rank-and-file testified to the extent of coercion and pressure brought against them by the forces hostile to their independence. "Little Kennedy bills" were introduced in a number of state legislatures and enacted by some. The forces of opposition called off their attack upon the organized blind and beat a strategic retreat.

Meanwhile, in that second decade, the Federation faced another bitter struggle within its own house. Not all Federationists were happy with the way the movement was going. There were a few who were decidedly "soft on custodialism", overfriendly to the agencies which opposed us. There were others with a burning passion for leadership and office, an ambition which burned the deeper as it burned in vain. There were still others whose grievances were personal; real enough to them if not substantial in fact. All of these factors combined in the fifties to form a temporary crisis of confidence and collaboration.

But then, as suddenly as it had begun, the civil turmoil ended. Those who had desired power for their own ends or for itself; who had sought to change the character and officers of the movement, departed to form their own organizations. Shaken in its unity, depleted in resources, diminished in membership, the Federation began the hard task of rebuilding and rededication.

That task has been the primary assignment of the sixties, and today, at the halfway point, we may report that it has been accomplished. During the five years past we have regained stability, recovered unity, and preserved democracy.

We have found new and dynamic leadership, in the person of a president imbued with youth and creative vigor. We have regained our fund-raiser -- the wizard of St. Louis -- and with him has come the prospect of renewed resources. We have restored and rejuvenated the BRAILLE MONITOR, as not only the voice but the clarion call of the federated blind. We have reached across the seas, extending the hand of brotherhood and the vision of federationism to blind people the world over -- through the International Federation of the Blind.

We have made new friends -- yes, and found new champions -- in the Congress of the United States and in the legislatures of the states. And in so doing we have brightened the vistas of hope and opportunity not only for half a million blind Americans but for all the handicapped and deprived who rely upon their government for a hand up rather than a handout.

And in this new decade of the sixties, we of the Federation are reaching toward another base of understanding and support. We intend to carry our case and our cause, not only to the lawmakers in Congress but to the judges in the courts as well: for it is in their tribunals that new pathways of progress are being cleared, as the result of a happily evolving concept which holds that the great principles of the Constitution -- among them liberty, dignity, privacy, and equality -- must be brought down off the wall and made real in the lives of all our citizens with all deliberate speed.

The organized blind have traveled far in the past quarter century. The road ahead will not be easy. But the road is never easy for the blind traveler; every step is a challenge, every independent advance is a conquest. The movement of the organized blind in society is like the movement of the blind person in traffic: in both cases the gain is proportionate to the risk. Let us adventure together.

It was Theodore Roosevelt who said that the sign of real strength

in a nation is that it can speak softly and carry a big stick. The sign of strength in our movement is that we speak vigorously and carry a white cane.

Whatever may be the challenges to come--whatever the opposition to be converted or defeated, whatever the problems of maintaining internal democracy and external drive, whatever the difficulties of activating successful but indifferent blind, whatever the slow progress and temporary setbacks in achieving our ultimate goals--our experience and accomplishments of a quarter-of-a-century tell us one thing: we can prevail!

And we shall prevail!

We have prevailed over the limitations of blindness, in our lives and in our movement. We shall prevail over the handicap of blindness in all its forms: not the physical disability, which is an act of nature that may not be repealed, but the social handicap which is an act of men that men may counteract.

We have prevailed, in our movement and our minds, over the myth of the "helpless blind man". We shall prevail over that myth of helplessness in the minds of all who have sight but not vision.

We have prevailed over the foredooming conclusion that the blind are ineducable, that lack of sight means loss of mind, and over the only slightly less foredooming conclusion that the blind can be taught but only the rudiments of academe and rudest of crafts. We shall prevail over every arbitrary restriction and exclusion inhibiting the fullest development of mind and skill of every blind person.

We have prevailed over the legal stricture that the blind should not mix and mingle with the public in public places but should confine their movement to the rocking chair. We shall prevail over the lingering concept in the law of torts that the white cane and white cane laws should not be given full credence and that blind persons are automatically guilty of contributory negligence whenever an accident befalls them.

We have prevailed over some of the myriad social discriminations against the blind in hotels, in renting rooms, houses, and safety deposit boxes, in traveling alone, in blood banks, in playing at gambling tables, in jury duty, and serving as a judge, in purchasing insurance, in release from the penitentiary on parole, in holding student body offices, in marriage laws and customs. We shall prevail over the

whole sorry pattern which is no less vicious because it is sustained by the best of motives.

We have prevailed over the notion that the blind are capable only of sheltered employment. We shall prevail over the institution of the sheltered workshop itself as a proper place for any blind person capable of competitive employment.

We have prevailed against the exclusion of qualified blind workers in a number of fields of competitive employment. We shall prevail over such discrimination in every calling and career.

We have prevailed over the principle of welfare aid as a mere palliative for those in distress, without built-in incentives to help them out of that distress. We shall prevail over the stubborn remnants of the poor-law creed -- the means test, the liens pest, the requirement of residence, the concept of relatives' responsibility -- wherever they rear their Elizabethan heads in the statutes of the states and Nation.

We have prevailed over the obstacles to communication and communion among the blind of America -- the physical distances, the psychological differences, the lack of devices for writing and talking -- which have isolated us from one another. We shall prevail over the greater obstacles to communication and affiliation among the blind people of the world -- we shall carry federationism to all the nations.

We shall prevail because we have demonstrated to the world and to ourselves that the blind possess the strength to stand together and to walk alone; the capacity to speak for themselves and to be heard with respect; the resolute determination of a common purpose and a democratic cause; the faith that can move mountains -- and mount movements!

Twenty-five years -- a quarter of a century -- how much time is that? In the perspective of eternity, it is an incalculable and imperceptible fraction. In the chronology of the universe, it is less than an instant. In the eye of God, it is no more than a flash. In the biography of a social movement, based on justice and equality, it is a measurable segment. In the life of a man -- say from his thirtieth to his fifty-fifth year -- it encompasses the best years, the very prime, when experience, energy, and intelligence mingle in their most favorable proportions, before which he is too young, and after which he is too old. As a man who spent those twenty-five best years of life in and with the Federation, I have few regrets, immense pride, and boundless hope for the future.
